

**AFFAIRS OF STATE:  
THE INTERAGENCY  
AND NATIONAL SECURITY**

**Gabriel Marcella  
Editor**

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## FOREWORD

No power in history has matched the global reach and influence of the United States. Yet coordinating and integrating the various elements of national power through the interagency process remains the essential challenge of American statesmen. The challenge will be even greater in the 21st century as strategists, civilian and military alike, grapple with a geopolitical context that will require fluency in meshing all the levers and instruments of power. The authors of this compendium join in a common effort to shed light on how the interagency works with respect to national security. In their respective chapters, they are particularly sensitive to matters of institutional culture and to the human and institutional proclivities that go into making and implementing decisions in the complex national security system of the U.S. Government. Along the way, they make prudent recommendations for improving the process.

The findings and insights are those of seasoned practitioners, of scholar diplomats of the arts of statecraft, and of accomplished academics. This book will be invaluable for national security professionals who will work in the complex interagency system in Washington, DC, or in the field. The Strategic Studies Institute is very pleased to publish this volume. It is a rich contribution to the ongoing efforts to improve how the interagency works and to the education of our future leaders.



DOUGLAS C. LOVELACE, JR.

Director

Strategic Studies Institute



**CHAPTER 1**

**UNDERSTANDING THE INTERAGENCY  
PROCESS:  
THE CHALLENGE OF ADAPTATION**

**Gabriel Marcella<sup>1</sup>**

Power is the capacity to direct the decisions and actions of others. Power derives from strength and will. Strength comes from the transformation of resources into capabilities. Will infuses objectives with resolve. Strategy marshals capabilities and brings them to bear with precision. Statecraft seeks through strategy to magnify the mass, relevance, impact, and irresistibility of power. It guides the ways the state deploys and applies its power abroad. These ways embrace the arts of war, espionage, and diplomacy. The practitioners of these three arts are the paladins of statecraft.<sup>2</sup>

Chas. W. Freeman, Jr.

**Introduction.**

The war colleges of the United States are a unique national asset. They are centers of academic excellence for preparing military and civilian officers for higher positions in the national security system. They are also living laboratories for studying how to use power for strategic purposes. The authors of this book joined in a common mission convinced that there was a critical piece missing in such study: the vast area known as the interagency, the process that makes the development and implementation of policy and strategy possible in a pluralistic decisionmaking system. This book is the result of a multiyear effort among scholars and statesmen who came together to develop a series of papers that analyze various parts of the interagency,



recommend improvements, and add to the literature so that scholars and statesmen will be wiser in performing their responsibilities. Common to all the chapters is a passion to improve what is perceived to be a system that needs repair. But repair will not be possible unless we understand how it works, and what its strengths and weaknesses are.

The succeeding chapters present a remarkable set of perspectives by seasoned professionals. Each one is a rich case study that combines recent history, theory, international relations, and profound reflections from up close by diplomats, civil servants, and military officers who have spent careers working abroad and in various agencies in Washington, DC. They literally carried the banner for learning and adaptation for their departments and agencies, working to improve strategic integration. Their papers have priceless insights that cannot be easily replicated. Moreover, the various chapters lend themselves well to use in classes dealing with the integration of the instruments of national power.

### **The Imperative of Strategic Integration.**

The United States is the only fully equipped, globally deployed, interagency superpower. It is the indispensable anchor of international order. Nothing quite like it has ever existed. Indeed such great powers as Rome, Byzantium, China, Spain, England, and France achieved extraordinary sophistication, enormous institutional and cultural influence, and longevity, but they never achieved the full articulation of America's global reach. Today the United States deploys some 250 diplomatic missions in the form of embassies, consulates, special missions, and membership in international organizations. It possesses a unified

military command system that covers all regions of the world, the homeland, and even outer space. It is the leader of an interlocking set of alliances and agreements that promotes peace; open trade; and the principles of democracy, human rights, and protection of the environment. American capital, technology, and culture influence the globe. American power and influence is pervasive and multidimensional. All instruments are deployed. Yet the challenge of strategic integration, of bringing the instruments into calculated effectiveness, remains. Presidents and their national security staffs strive to achieve coherence, with varying levels of success through the “interagency process.”

The interagency decisionmaking process is uniquely American in character, size, and complexity. The process also reflects the constant tension between the reality of global commitments and the constraints imposed by America’s lofty values and its imperfect institutions, a concern shared by the founding fathers and enshrined in the system of checks and balances. Given ever expanding responsibilities, it is imperative that national security professionals master it to work effectively within it. The complex challenges to national security in the 21st century will require intelligent integration of resources and unity of effort within the government.

At the doorstep of the 21st century, there is a widely held consensus that our institutions of government need to be updated, reformed, and restructured. The failures of American intelligence and policy coordination evidenced by the disaster of September 11, 2001 (9/11), the failure to plan effectively for and the frustrations with the post-conflict phase of Operation IRAQI FREEDOM, the Katrina Hurricane disaster in New Orleans in 2006, as well as other events since

the 1990s, have called into question the efficacy of the process for handling national and international crises, from peace to war.

There has been a veritable cornucopia of writing that advocates reforming the interagency, whose foundation was the National Security Act of 1947 for a simpler time, for an emerging bipolar world, to meet challenges of a different order than those of today. Some have advocated a Goldwater-Nichols type of reform of the national security system, taking a cue from the creation of military jointness by Congress in 1986.<sup>3</sup> But, because of the dispersal of authority, resources, expertise, and personnel among competing departments and because they are civilian, rather than military, the analogy to jointness is not appropriate to the rest of the government, which was designed by the founding fathers with the fear of concentrating power in the executive.<sup>4</sup> Another proposal for improving performance in national security is Joseph S. Nye's and Richard L. Armitage's "smart power," the "ability to combine the hard power of coercion or payment with soft power of attraction into a successful strategy."<sup>5</sup>

Still others, arguing that the president does not have a command and control structure over the government, advocate placing greater authority in the National Security Council, an organization which works directly for the president.<sup>6</sup> There have been, to be sure, countless important successes thanks to the interagency process. For example, U.S. policy with respect to Colombia (counternarcotics, counterterrorism, democracy building) since the creation of *Plan Colombia* in 1999 is an excellent case study in getting it right, in getting all the agencies in Washington, DC, and in the field to work relatively well in integrating their respective contributions. Resolving the Central American crisis

of the 1980s was another success story. But when all is said and done, the current interagency process is inadequate.

### **Learning and Adaptation.**

How the nation and the government learn from experience and adapt their institutions for the future are keys to understanding the interagency process. The large and complex interagency system is a recent innovation, with war being the most important stimulant to its growth, especially World War II. Indeed, many of the recent proposals for interagency reform originate from the defense community, which has seen its commitments multiply globally. The United States first faced the challenge of strategic integration in an embryonic interagency process during World War II. Mobilizing the nation, the government, and the armed forces for war and winning the peace highlighted the importance of resources and budgets, of integrating diplomacy with military power, gathering and analyzing enormous quantities of intelligence, conducting joint and combined military operations, and managing coalition strategies and balancing competing regional priorities, for example, the European versus the Pacific theater in national strategy. From World War II and the onset of the Cold War emerged a number of institutional and policy innovations. Among them: the modern Department of State, Department of Defense (DoD) (from the old War and Navy Departments), a centralized intelligence system, the Marshall Plan for European reconstruction, the unified military command system, the Air Force, the predecessor of the Agency for International Development (Point Four), the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and other

alliances, military assistance pacts, military advisory groups, and the U.S. Information Agency. In essence, an extensive national security system emerged, whose complexity and size would grow.

There is no period in American history like the late 1940s and early 1950s that is so full of national and institutional learning that John P. Lovell calls it “purposeful adaptation.” He defines it as “the need to develop and pursue foreign policy goals that are sensitive to national needs and aspirations and to the realities of a changing world environment.”<sup>7</sup> The evolution of the interagency process parallels America’s purposeful adaptation to changing global realities of the last 6 decades. But it is not an orderly evolution because of structural and cultural impediments, such as discontinuities from one administration to another and poor institutional memory.<sup>8</sup> Prominent historical markers along the path of learning and adaptation include such documents as National Security Council (NSC) 68, the intellectual framework for the containment strategy against the Soviet Union. Though not a policy document, the Weinberger Doctrine articulated criteria for the use of military power that dramatically influenced the shape of American strategy in the 1980s and 1990s.

There are countless examples of how American statesmen codify in writing the patterns of “purposeful adaptation.” The tragic events of September 11, 2001, had such an impact on American national security that the George W. Bush administration, urged by Congress, created the Department for Homeland Security. It also published a series of strategy documents on counterterrorism, homeland security, military strategy, cyber security, and infrastructure security. Bush’s National Security Strategy (NSS) dramatically

redefined the philosophical underpinnings of the U.S. role in the world. Because the attacks of 9/11 represented an assault on international order and exposed U.S. vulnerabilities to asymmetric warfare by nonstate actors, the NSS of September 17, 2002, spoke of the need to redefine the Westphalian concept of sovereignty for the purpose of reestablishing order and security in the international system, to include preemptive war.<sup>9</sup>

When the United States reluctantly inherited global responsibilities in 1945, its statesmen faced three challenges: forging a system of collective security, promoting decolonization, and building a stable international financial order. These and the next 4 decades of intense threat from the other superpower had a decisive impact on shaping the interagency process. With the end of bipolar ideological and geopolitical conflict, the foreign policy and defense agenda has been captured by globalization, free trade, democratization, subnational ethnic and religious conflict, failing and failed states, humanitarian contingencies, climate change and ecological deterioration, diseases, terrorism, ungoverned space, contraband, trafficking in humans, international organized crime, drug trafficking, proliferation of small weapons, as well as the technology for weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and homeland security. The interagency process has not caught up to the extraordinary demands put on policy by this vast agenda of global challenges.

### **National Security Council.**

To bring strategic coherence, consensus, and decisiveness to the burgeoning global responsibilities of the emerging superpower, the National Security Act

of 1947 created the National Security Council (NSC). Though the NSC will be treated extensively in the next two chapters, it is important to set it within the larger framework of the interagency. The statutory members are the President, the Vice President, and the Secretaries of State and Defense. By statute, the Director of Central Intelligence and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff are advisors. Other advisors, including additional cabinet members, may be invited. The President chairs the meeting; but the Council need not convene formally to function. Formal NSC meetings are rare. There are alternatives to formal meetings, such as the ABC luncheons of Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, Secretary of Defense William Cohen, and Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs Sandy Berger, or the Deputies' breakfasts and lunches. The President himself may at any time meet informally with members of his cabinet. In recent years, teleconferencing facilitates such senior level consultations.

The "NSC system" of policy coordination and integration across the departments and agencies operates 24 hours a day. Today, the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs typically directs the staff. The emergence of the modern "operational presidency"<sup>10</sup> brought to the NSC greater authority over the development and implementation of policy, thus creating a new power center close to the president in the Old Executive Office Building that competes for jurisdiction with the Departments of State and Defense.

The NSC staff does the daily coordination and policy integration with all the departments. The Clinton NSC staff of 2000 had 100 policy professionals covering regional and functional responsibilities. The

Bush staff of 2008 grew back to 109 after an initial cut of 30 percent in 2001. Staffers are detailed from the diplomatic corps, the intelligence community, the civil service, the military services, academia, and the private sector. The staffing procedures are personalized to the president's style and comfort level. The structure of the staff, its internal and external functioning, and the degree of control of policy by the president varies. Under President Bill Clinton, the day-to-day policy coordination and integration was done by the NSC staff, divided into the functional and geographic directorates depicted in Figure 1.

Dramatic changes came with the election of George W. Bush. Comfortable with a corporate style of leadership and surrounding himself with experienced statesmen like Secretary of State Colin Powell (former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs, and White House Fellow), Vice President Richard Cheney (former Congressman, Secretary of Defense, and White House Chief of Staff), and Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld (former Secretary of Defense, Ambassador to NATO, and Congressman), President Bush centralized policy authority by establishing new structures and procedures.<sup>11</sup>



# National Security Council Staff

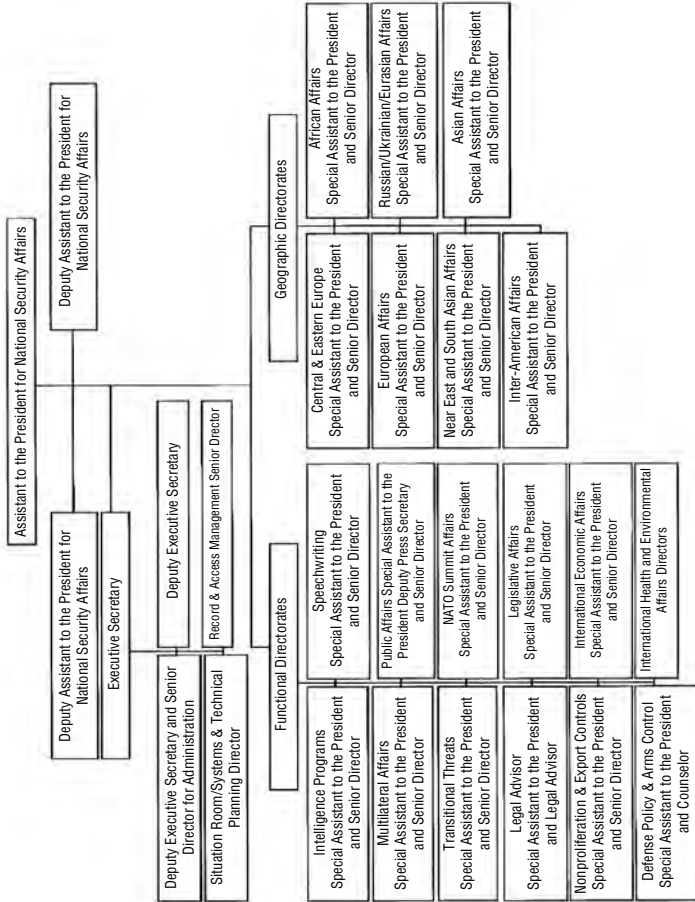


Figure 1. Clinton's National Security Council Staff.

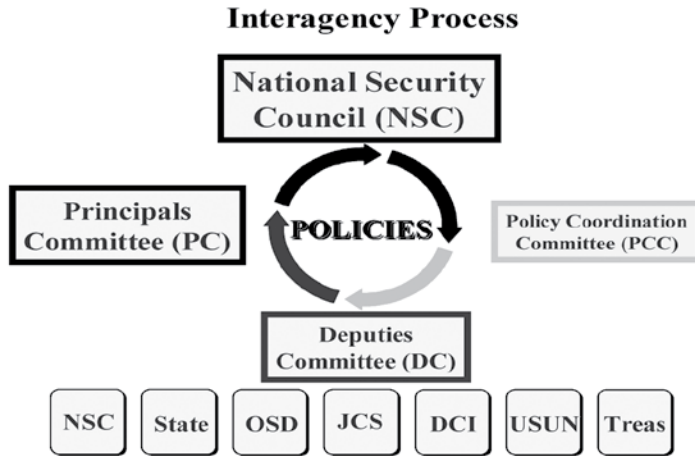
The process began with new nomenclature for presidential directives.<sup>12</sup> National Security Presidential Directive 1 (NSPD1), dated February 13, 2001, established six regional Policy Coordinating Committees (PCCs) and 11 (later 14) PCCs to handle functional responsibilities.<sup>13</sup> In 2005 they were as follows:

Regional PCCs:

- Europe
- Western Hemisphere
- East Asia
- South Asia
- Near East and North Africa
- Africa

Functional PCCs (with department responsible in parentheses)

- Democracy, Human Rights, and International Operations (NSC)
- International Development and Humanitarian Assistance (State)
- Global Environment (NSC and National Economic Council [NEC])
- International Finance (Treasury)
- Transnational Economic Issues (NEC)
- Counter-Terrorism and National Preparedness (NSC)
- Defense Strategy, Force Structure, and Planning (Defense)
- Arms Control (NSC)
- Intelligence and Counterintelligence (NSC)
- Records Access and Information Security (NSC)
- International Organized Crime (NSC)
- Contingency Planning (NSC)
- Space (NSC)
- HIV/AIDS and Infectious Diseases (State, Health and Human Services)



**Figure 2. Bush Administration Interagency Process.**

The NSC Staff of mid 2008 had the following members and offices, with number of personnel in parentheses:

- Assistant to the President/National Security Advisor (APNSA) (1)
- Assistant to the President/Deputy National Security Advisor (DNSA) (1)
- Special Advisor for Strategic Planning and Institutional Reform (1)
- Special Advisor for Policy Implementation and Execution (1)
- Senior Directors for: Speech (1), Legal Affairs/ White House Counsel (3), Legislative Affairs (3), Intelligence Programs and Reform (5)
- NSC Spokesman (1)
- Assistant to the President (AP)/Deputy National Security Advisor (DNSA) for Iraq and Afghanistan (14)
- Special Assistant to the President (SAP) for Iraq and Afghanistan (1)

- Deputy Assistant to the President (DAP)/DNSA for Strategic Communication and Outreach (6)
- AP/DNSA for International Economics (10)
- DAP/NSA for Democracy Strategy (1)
- DAP/NSA for Combating Terrorism (9)
- DNSA for Regional Affairs (1)
- Senior Assistant to the President and Director for International Trade and Economics (1)
- Senior Director for Democracy, Human Rights, and International Organizations (4)
- Senior Director for Combating Terrorism (1)
- Special Assistant (SAP) to the President and Senior Director for Defense Policy and Strategy (7)
- SAP/Senior Director for Counter-proliferation (6)
- SAP/Senior Director for African Affairs (4)
- SAP/Senior Director for European Affairs (6)
- SAP/Senior Director for Russia (2)
- SAP/Senior Director for South and Central Asian Affairs (3)
- SAP/Senior Director for Western Hemisphere Affairs (5)
- SAP/Senior Director for East Asian Affairs (6).

Upon taking office in January 2001, the existing interagency working groups (IWG) that existed under Clinton were abolished by NSPD1. The activities of IWGs were transferred to the new PCCs. The PCCs were the most important structural changes made by the Bush administration. According to NSPD1, they were the “Day-to-day fora for interagency coordination of national security policy. They shall provide policy analysis for consideration by the more senior committees of the NSC system and ensure timely responses to decisions made by the president.”<sup>14</sup> The centralization of authority over national security matters reached levels not seen for many years. In spring 2003, a senior

national security careerist who was intimately involved with policymaking referred to interagency relations as “the worst in 20 years.” An experienced foreign policy hand commented: “The interagency system is broken” and averred that “instead of centralization of authority, there is fragmentation.”<sup>15</sup> Explanations for this state of affairs varied. They included the intrusion of group think dynamics among senior decisionmakers, the role of strong personalities, the bypassing of Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs Condoleezza Rice, as well as the deliberate isolation of the Department of State.<sup>16</sup> Others pointed to President Bush’s management style, and the unique power vested in Vice President Dick Cheney.

Another important interagency reorganization made by the Bush administration was the creation of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), and a unified military command, the Northern Command. The creation of DHS involved the transfer of responsibilities, people, and resources from existing agencies and departments to the new entity. DHS has over 170,000 employees and a budget of over 40 billion dollars. It constitutes the largest reorganization of the U.S. Government since the creation of the Defense Department. DHS combined 22 agencies “specializing in various disciplines,” such as law enforcement, border security, immigration, biological research, computer security, transportation security, disaster mitigation, and port security.<sup>17</sup> Though it is a national security department, it will not be involved in power projection. Yet, it will use many skills and resources that reside across the agencies: military, diplomatic, law enforcement, intelligence, and logistics. Homeland security also involves the concept of federalism, whereby some 87,000 state and local jurisdictions share

power with federal institutions. The challenge that integrating federalism injects into national security planning will be immense. The poor performance of federal, state, and local authorities during the Katrina disaster verified this. The creation of the Department of Homeland Security has also spawned the Homeland Security Council, the analog to the National Security Council.

The NSC staff does the daily and long-term coordination and integration of foreign policy and national security across the government. There is a natural tension between the policy coordination function and policymaking. President Jimmy Carter's Director of Latin American Affairs at the NSC, Robert Pastor, argues that:

. . . tension between NSC and State derives in part from the former's control of the agenda and the latter's control of implementation. State Department officials tend to be anxious about the NSC usurping policy, and the NSC tends to be concerned that State either might not implement the President's decisions or might do so in a way that would make decisions State disapproved of appear ineffective and wrong.<sup>18</sup>

The NSC staff is ideally a coordinating body, but it oscillates between the poles, taking policy control over some issues while allowing State, Defense, Justice, Commerce, or Homeland Security to be the lead agency on most national security and foreign policy issues. On some key issues, such as the Kosovo crisis of 1998-99, the NSC staff may take over policy control from State. Similarly, policy towards Cuba and Haiti in 1993-95 was handled directly out of the White House because of domestic constituencies. As we have seen above in the 2008 NSC staff, the primacy of Iraq and

Afghanistan policy, as well as counterterrorism, made it imperative to nest these coordinating capacities in the George W. Bush NSC staff. In virtually all cases, however, major policy decisions must be cleared through the NSC staff and the National Security Advisor. In general, the clearance process involves a review by the appropriate NSC staff director to assure that the new policy initiative is consistent with the president's overall policy in that functional or regional area, that it has been coordinated with all appropriate departments, and that political risks associated with the new initiative have been identified and assessed. This process makes the relevant departments stakeholders in the final policy. The Oliver North Iran-Contra caper created an autonomous operational entity in the NSC staff, an aberration that does not invalidate the general rule. The salient point is that proximity to the president gives the NSC staff clout in the interagency process. Such clout must be used sparingly lest it cause resentment and resistance or overlook the policy wisdom available across the executive departments.

### **A Theory of the Interagency: The President Mobilizes the Government.**

The interagency is a process involving human beings and complex organizations with different cultures, and different outlooks on what is good for the national interest and what is the best policy—all driven by the compulsion to defend and expand turf. The process is political because at stake is power—personal and institutional—branch of government, and party. The “power game” involves the push and pull of negotiation, the guarding of policy prerogatives, the hammering out of compromises, and the normal

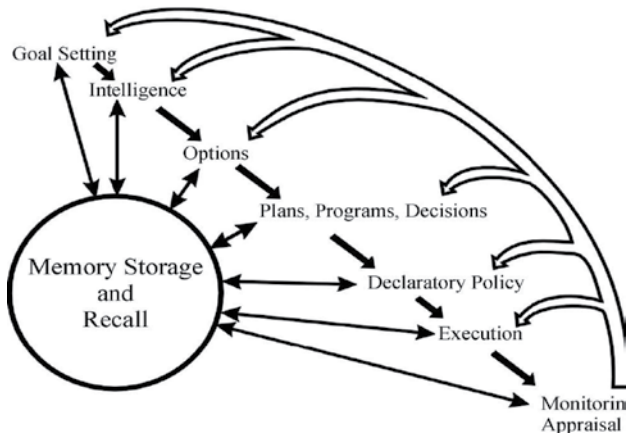
human and institutional propensity to resist change.<sup>19</sup> Regardless of the style of the president and the structures developed for the management of national security policy, the interagency process performs the same basic functions: identifies policy issues and questions, formulates options, raises issues to the appropriate level for decisions, makes decisions, and oversees their implementation.

Policy exists at five interrelated levels: conceptualization, articulation, budgeting, implementation, and post-implementation analysis and feedback. Conceptualization involves the intellectual task of policy development, such as a presidential directive. Articulation is the public declaration of policy that the president or subordinates make.

Budgeting involves testimony and the give and take before Congress and its committees to justify policy goals and to request funding. Implementation is the programmed application of resources to achieve the policy objectives. Post-implementation analysis and feedback is a continuous effort to assess the effectiveness of policy and to make appropriate adjustments. It is conducted by all the agencies in the field. The General Accounting Office of the Congress makes extensive evaluations of policy effectiveness. Hearings and visits to the field by congressional delegations and staffers also make evaluations.



John Lovell's ideal system (Figure 3) has perfect goal setting, complete and accurate intelligence, comprehensive analysis and selection of the best options, clear articulation of policy and its rationale, effective execution, thorough and continuous assessment of the effects, and perfect learning from experience and the ability to recall relevant experience and information.



**Figure 3. Ideal Foreign Policy Process.**<sup>20</sup>

Such perfection is impossible. The reality is:

TASKS	CONSTRAINTS
Goal Setting	National interests are subject to competing claims; goals established through political struggle.
Intelligence	Always incomplete, susceptible to overload, delays, and distortions caused by biases and ambiguity in interpretation.
Option Formulation	Limited search for options, comparisons made in general terms according to predispositions rather than cost-benefit analysis.
Plans, Programs, and Decisions	Choices made in accordance with prevailing mind sets, influenced by groupthink and political compromise
Declaratory Policy	Multiple voices, contradictions and confusion, self-serving concern for personal image and feeding the appetite of the media.
Execution	Breakdowns in communication, fuzzy lines of authority, organizational parochialism, bureaucratic politics, and delays.
Monitoring and Appraisal	Gaps, vague standards, rigidities in adaptation, and feedback failures.
Memory Storage and Recall	Spotty and unreliable, selective learning, and application of lessons.

**Table 1. Policy in Practice.<sup>21</sup>**

Effective policy requires control, resources, and a system of accountability. The most compelling challenge for the executive is to retain policy control. Since presidents do not have the time or expertise to oversee policymaking in detail, they delegate responsibility. But “nobody is in charge” is an often-heard refrain of the interagency process. By delegating responsibility, control becomes diffused. Moreover, the quest for resources brings in another stakeholder, Congress, which has the constitutional responsibility to scrutinize policy initiatives and vote monies for foreign affairs and national defense. By then, a literal Pandora’s box of players and expectations opens. Congressional committees and their talented staffs have enormous impact on national security and foreign policy.

The president begins mobilizing the government immediately upon election. A transition team works closely with the outgoing administration. The cabinet, which must be confirmed by the Senate, must be nominated. Additionally, some 6,000 presidential level appointees will fill the subcabinet positions, staff the White House and the NSC, take up ambassadorships (though many are retained, serving ambassadors submit their resignation when the occupant of the White House changes), as well as second, third, and fourth level positions in the executive departments. The purpose of these nominations is to gain control and establish accountability to the president and his agenda. President Clinton faced difficulties because he never finished staffing his first administration.

Thus there is a high turnover and the injection of new talent and energy—at times inexperienced but equipped with new ideas—at the top echelons of American government every time the occupant of the White House changes. Continuity of government re-

sides in the nonpartisan professionals of the civil service, the diplomatic service, the military, and the intelligence community. The transition to a new administration is a period of great anticipation about the direction of policy. Consequently, the entire interagency produces transition papers to assist and inform the newcomers, and to also protect the institutional interests of the various departments from unfriendly encroachment.

The first months of a new administration are a period of learning. Newly appointed people must familiarize themselves with the structure and process of policymaking, including getting to know the essential people around town. This necessity invariably leads to a trial-and-error atmosphere. In anticipation of the passing of the mantle, think tanks and the foreign policy and defense communities prepare for the transition by writing papers recommending the rationale for policy. These will inform the new administration about the central commitments of U.S. policy and allow departments and agencies to stake a claim for resources. The new administration will also mandate policy reviews.

Making speeches and declaring policy and doctrines is another way for the president to mobilize the government. The National Security Strategy (NSS) document, which bears the president's signature and is supposed to be produced annually, is eagerly awaited, though not with equal intensity across departments, as an indicator of an administration's direction in national security and foreign policy. The NSS is eagerly awaited for another reason; it is the best example of "purposeful adaptation" by the American government to changing global realities and responsibilities. It expresses strategic vision, what the United States stands for in the world, its priorities, and a sensing of how

the instruments of national power—the diplomatic, economic, and military—will be arrayed. Since it is truly an interagency product, the NSS also serves to discipline the interagency system to understand the president’s agenda and priorities and to develop a common language that gives coherence to policy.

The first NSS in 1987 focused on the Soviet threat. The George H. Bush administration expanded it by including regional strategies, economic policy, arms control, transnational issues, and the environment. The Clinton document of 1994 proposed “engagement and enlargement,” promoting democracy, economic prosperity, and security through strength. The 1995 version added criteria on when and how military forces would be used. By 1997, the integrating concepts of “shape,” “prepare,” and “respond” for the national military strategy came into prominence. To the core objectives of enhancing security and promoting prosperity and democracy were added fighting terrorism, international crime, and drug trafficking, along with managing the international financial crisis. Homeland defense against the threat of mass casualty attacks and regional strategies completed the agenda.

Another instrument is the national security directives process. Administrations have titled these documents differently, and they have produced them in greater and lesser quantity. The two Clinton administrations produced 73 Presidential Decision Directives (PDD), and the George W. Bush administration issued 59 National Security Presidential Directives and 24 Homeland Security Policy Directives by June 2008. Other totals and titles are: George H. Bush, 79 National Security Decision Directives; Reagan, 325 National Security Decision Memoranda; Carter, 63 Presidential Directives; Nixon-Ford, 348 National Security Decision

Memoranda; and Kennedy-Johnson, 372 National Security Action Memoranda. Each administration will try to put its own stamp on national security and foreign policy, though there is great continuity with previous administrations. Whereas Reagan emphasized restoring the preeminence of American military power and rolling back the “evil empire,” Clinton focused on strengthening the American economy, open trade, democratization, conflict resolution, humanitarian assistance, fighting drug trafficking and consumption, counterterrorism and nonproliferation. A national defense priority was imposed on the George W. Bush administration by the events of 9/11. In response, the Bush administration—in addition to the NSPDs mentioned above—created a new category of Homeland Security Presidential Directives (HSPD). Some policy documents serve jointly as NSPDs and HSPDs. For example, NSPD 43 on Domestic Nuclear Detection is also HSPD 14.<sup>22</sup>

National security directives are macro level documents, often classified, that take much deliberate planning to develop. The process begins with a presidential directive to review policy that tasks the relevant agencies to develop a new policy based on broad guidance. For example, Clinton’s PDD 14 for counternarcotics emphasized greater balance between supply and demand strategies. Because of the many constraints placed on the use of economic and military assistance to fight the “war on drugs” and to help Colombia, PDD 14 evolved into the Colombia-specific PDD 73. This, in turn, was superseded in the Bush administration by NSPD 18, which, thanks to 9/11 and the terrorism in Colombia, went further and provided support for both counternarcotics and counterterrorism activities in Colombia. The evolution

of policy documents over nearly 10 years nurtured the growth of significant institutional memory in the interagency with respect to the Colombian conflict.

The learning went both ways because Colombian officials had to adapt to the Washington policy process, while Washington had to learn Bogotá's. Because of the global reach of American power and influence, such adaptation is becoming more necessary as the United States must learn to deal with very different "interministerial" arrangements in foreign countries. Clinton's celebrated PDD 25 set down an elaborate set of guidelines for U.S. involvement in peace operations. It became so effective as a planning device that the United Nations (UN), as well as nations that conduct peace operations, adopted it in modified form for planning its own peace operations. This is an excellent example of the international transfer of American purposeful adaptation. Other nations also used the organizing principles for their strategic and operational planning in peacekeeping.

Another instructive example is Clinton's Latin American PDD 21. Effective on December 27, 1993, it emphasized democracy promotion and free trade. It was addressed to more than 20 departments and agencies: Vice President, Secretary of State, Secretary of the Treasury, Secretary of Defense, Attorney General, Secretary of Commerce, Secretary of Labor, Director of the Office of Management and Budget, U.S. Trade Representative, Representative of the United States to the UN, Chief of Staff to the President, Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs, Director of Central Intelligence, Chair of the Council of Economic Advisors, Assistant to the President for National Economic Policy, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Administrator of the Agency

for International Development, Director of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, and Director of the U.S. Information Agency.

### **Functional Interdependence: The Iron Law of the Interagency.**

The point of listing departments and agencies is to identify the interagency stakeholders, though the size of the stake will vary greatly among them according to the particular issue. The stakeholders are related by functional interdependence; they have different resources, personnel, and expertise that must be integrated for policy to be effective. It is an iron rule of the interagency that *no national security or international affairs issue can be resolved by one agency alone*. For example, the DoD needs the diplomatic process that the Department of State masters to deploy forces abroad, build coalitions, negotiate solutions to conflict, conduct noncombatant evacuations (NEO) of American citizens caught in difficult circumstances abroad, and administer security assistance. The Department of State in turn depends on the logistical capabilities of the DoD to deploy personnel and materials abroad during crises, conduct coercive diplomacy, support military-to-military contacts, and give substance to alliances and defense relationships. The Office of National Drug Control Policy, a new cabinet level position created under the Clinton administration in 1997, must rely on a range of agencies to reduce the supply abroad and consumption of drugs at home. Finally, all require intelligence input to make sound decisions.

The pattern of functional interdependence, whereby departments stayed within their jurisdictions, began to fray in the George W. Bush administration. Press reports



in the spring of 2003 focused on the Bush “policy team at war with itself.”<sup>23</sup> Accordingly, there was a “tectonic shift” of decisionmaking power from the Department of State to Defense because of the strong personalities and neo-conservative ideology of Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld and subordinates, principally Deputy Secretary Paul Wolfowitz. The shift was facilitated by the military emphasis put on the “war on terrorism,” and the marginalization of the Department of State. The prospect of the DoD dominating raised concerns about the militarization of foreign policy and the standing of the United States in the world. Inattention to functional interdependence was a contributing factor to the ineffectiveness of postwar reconstruction planning for Iraq in 2003.<sup>24</sup> In October 2003 President Bush attempted to improve the Iraq reconstruction effort by placing his National Security Advisor, Condoleezza Rice, in charge. Earlier in the year the president had (via NSPD 24) given authority over the Iraq reconstruction to the Defense Department, thereby weakening the hand of State.<sup>25</sup>

The problems associated with post-conflict reconstruction in Iraq led to an upsurge of recommendations on how to improve the system for the future. The remarkable point about this upsurge was that there was a similar era of codifying lessons learned in post-conflict reconstruction: the early to mid-1990s. This time the House of Representatives and the Senate proposed the “Winning the Peace Act of 2003,” which created within the Department of State the Coordinator of Reconstruction and Stabilization. A comprehensive study published in November 2003 by Hans Binnendijk and Stuart Johnson of the National Defense University advocated transforming military institutions to perform “stabilization and reconstruction” operations. It also

recommended harnessing interagency capabilities via the creation of a rapidly deployable National Interagency Contingency Coordinating Group to meet the need of a national level group to plan and coordinate post-conflict operations.<sup>26</sup> In July 2004 the Office of Coordinator of Reconstruction and Stabilization took form in the Department of State under the leadership of Ambassador Carlos Pascual. Yet, 1 year later the office was still understaffed and underbudget, an example of an unfunded mandate. The Congress, which legislated the office, by July 2005 had not provided funding for the Office to do its job properly.<sup>27</sup> By December 2005, a new National Security Presidential Directive (NSPD 44) would give the Department of State the responsibility to manage interagency efforts to conduct reconstruction and stabilization.

Ideally in response to the promulgation of a presidential directive all agencies will energize their staffs and develop the elements that shape the policy programs. But this takes time and seldom creates optimum results, in part because of competing priorities on policymakers, limited time, constrained resources, and congressional input. For example, the Haiti crisis of 1992-94 and congressional passage of the North America Free Trade Act consumed most of the energy of the Clinton administration's NSC staff and the Bureau of Inter-American Affairs of the Department of State during 1993-94 to the detriment of other Latin American policy. The Central American crisis of the 1980s also crowded out the broader agenda for Latin American policy. The war in Iraq similarly engaged resources and energies after 2003.

In theory, once the policy elements are put together, they are costed out and submitted to Congress for approval and funding. The reality is that a presidential directive is not a permanent guide to the actions of

agencies. Rarely is it fully implemented. The culture of the various executive departments will modify how directives are interpreted. For example, for the military oriented Defense Department, a directive is an order to be carried out. For State, a directive may be interpreted as the general direction a policy should take. Presidential policy can be overtaken by new priorities, new administrations, and by the departure of senior officials who had the stakes, the personal relationships, know how, and institutional memory to make it work. A senior NSC staffer, Navy Captain Joseph Bouchard, Director of Defense Policy and Arms Control, remarked in 1999 that one could not be sure about whether a directive from a previous administration was still in force because the government does not maintain a consolidated list of these documents for security reasons. Moreover, directives and other presidential documents are removed to presidential libraries and the National Archives when administrations change. A senior DoD official stated that directives are rarely referred to after they are final, are usually overtaken by events soon after publication, and are rarely updated. In this respect the interagency evaluation of PDD 56's effectiveness published in May 1997 is instructive: "PDD 56 no longer has senior level ownership. The Assistant Secretaries, Deputy Assistant Secretaries, and the NSC officials who initiated the document have moved on to new positions."<sup>28</sup> The loss of institutional memory is not necessarily fatal. The permanent government retains much of the wisdom for the continuity of policy.

## **From PDD 56 to NSPD 44: Ephemeral or Purposeful Adaptation?**

PDD 56, promulgated in 1997, was developed as a tool to improve the interagency process. Directives normally deal with the external world of foreign policy and national security. PDD 56 was radically different, for it went beyond that and attempted to generate a cultural revolution in the way the U.S. Government prepares and organizes to deal with these issues. PDD 56, The Clinton Administration's Policy on Managing Complex Contingency Operations, is a superb example of codifying lessons of "purposeful adaptation" after fitful efforts by American civilian and military officials in the aftermath of problematic interventions in Panama (1989-90), Somalia (1992-94), and Haiti (1994-95). It tried to institutionalize:

- An Executive Committee chaired by the Deputies Committee (Assistant Secretaries)
- An integrated, interagency Political-Military Implementation Plan
- Interagency Rehearsal
- Interagency After-Action Review
- Training.

The philosophy was that interagency planning could make or break an operation. Moreover, early involvement in planning could accelerate contributions from civilian agencies that are often excluded from or are culturally averse to strategic and operational planning. An excellent Handbook for Interagency Management of Complex Contingency Operations issued in August 1998 contains in easy digestible form much wisdom about how to do it right. PDD 56 was applied extensively and adapted to new contingencies,

such as Eastern Slavonia (1995-98), Bosnia from 1995, Hurricane Mitch in Central America, the Ethiopia-Eritrea conflict after 1998, and the Kosovo contingency of 1998-99. A March 1999 review commented: "PDD 56 is intended to be applied as an integrated package of complementary mechanisms and tools . . . since its issuance in 1997, PDD 56 has not been applied as intended. Three major issues must be addressed to improve the utility of PDD 56." It recommended:

- Greater authority and leadership to promote PDD 56
- More flexible and less detailed political-military planning
- Dedicated training resources and greater outreach.

Reflected in the three recommendations were the recurring problems of the interagency: the need for decisive authority, contrasting approaches and institutional cultures (particularly diplomatic versus military) with respect to planning, and the lack of incentives across the government to create professionals expert in interagency work. PDD 56 was a noble effort to promote greater effectiveness. In late 1999, the PDD 56 planning requirement was embedded as an annex to contingency plans. Bush's February 2001 NSPD1 tried to provide some life support to PDD56 by stating: "The oversight of ongoing operations assigned in PDD/ NSC-56 . . . will be performed by the appropriate . . . PCCs, which may create subordinate working groups to provide coordination for ongoing operations." The failures in post-conflict planning and reconstruction for Iraq underlined the importance of taking PDD-56 seriously.

As a result of the purposeful adaptation engendered by the Iraq experience, the Bush administration promulgated National Security Presidential Directive 44, on December 7, 2005: "Management of Interagency Efforts Concerning Reconstruction and Stabilization." It speaks eloquently of the need for a coordinated U.S. Government effort for harmonizing interagency responses across the spectrum of conflict: complex contingencies, peacekeeping, failed and failing states, political transitions, and other military interventions. NSPD 44 states:

The Secretary of State shall coordinate and lead integrated United States Government efforts, involving all U.S. Departments and Agencies with relevant capabilities, to prepare, plan for, and conduct stabilization and reconstruction activities. The Secretary of State shall coordinate such efforts with the Secretary of Defense to ensure harmonization with any planned or ongoing U.S. military operations across the spectrum of conflict. Support relationships among elements of the United States Government will depend on the particular situation being addressed.<sup>29</sup>

The document closes with the statement: "This directive supersedes Presidential Decision Directive/ NSC 56, May 20, 1997, 'Managing Complex Contingency Operations'." A companion to NSPD 44 is the DoD Directive 3000.05 "Military Support for Stability, Security, Transition, and Reconstruction (SSTR) Operations," promulgated in late 2005.

### **The Operational Level: Ambassador, Country Team, and Combatant Commanders.**

We have discussed the national strategic level of the interagency process, that is, what occurs in Washington. Actually, the interagency process spans

three levels: the national strategic, the operational, and the tactical. These can be visualized as three gears spinning simultaneously in an integrated way. In the field, policy is implemented by ambassadors and their country teams, often working with the regional combatant commanders (COCOMs) if the issue is principally security or political-military in nature. Ambassadors and combatant commanders are not only implementers, they frequently shape policy via their reporting to Washington through a continuous flow of cables, after action reports, and proposals for new policy initiatives, as well as personal consultations in Washington with senior officials and members of Congress.

There is a permanent conversation between the embassy and the respective regional bureau in Washington, which includes a broad distribution of the cable traffic to such agencies as the White House, DoD, the regional combatant command, Department of Treasury, Commerce, the Joint Staff, and the intelligence community, as well as other organizations, such as the Coast Guard, when there is a "need to know." The "need to know" almost always includes other embassies in the region, or major embassies in other regions, and even at times, for example, the American Embassy to the Vatican, because of the unique global role of the Catholic Church. The ambassador and combatant commander often conduct one-on-one meetings over the multiplicity of security issues.

The embassy country team is a miniature replica of the Washington interagency. In the country team, the rubber proverbially meets the road of interagency implementation. Ambassadors and COCOMs rely on each other to promote policies that will enhance American interests in a country and region. COCOMs have

large staffs and awesome resources compared to the small staffs and resources of ambassadors. Moreover, their functions are different. The ambassador cultivates ties and is a conduit for bilateral communications through the art of diplomatic discourse. He or she promotes understanding of U.S. foreign policy, promotes American culture and business, and is responsible for American citizens in that country. The ambassador is the personal emissary of the president, who signs the ambassador's formal letter of instruction. The letter charges the ambassador "to exercise full responsibility for the direction, coordination, and supervision of all executive branch officers in (name of country), except for personnel under the command of a U.S. area military commander . . ." There is enough ambiguity in the mandate to require both ambassador and COCOM to use common sense and, in a nonbureaucratic way, work out issues of command and control over U.S. military personnel in the country. In effect, control is shared, the ambassador having policy control and the COCOM control over day-to-day military operations. Thus it is prudent that both work closely together to ensure that military operations meet the objectives of U.S. policy.

This is particularly the case in military operations other than war. Before and during noncombatant evacuations, peace operations, exercises, disaster relief, and humanitarian assistance, such cooperation will be imperative because of the different mixes of diplomacy, force, and preparation required. A successful U.S. policy effort requires a carefully calibrated combination of diplomatic and military pressure, with economic inducements added. The security assistance officer at the embassy can facilitate communication and bridge the policy and operational distance between the



ambassador and the COCOM. So can State's Foreign Policy Advisor to the COCOM, a senior ranking foreign service officer whose function is to provide the diplomatic and foreign policy perspective on military operations.<sup>30</sup> The personal and professional relationship between the Foreign Policy Advisor and the COCOM is key to success.

The COCOM represents the coercive capacity of American power through a chain of command that goes to the president. He and his sizable staff oversee the operational tempo, deployments, readiness, exercises, and training of divisions, brigades, fleets, and air wings—resources, language, and culture that are the opposite of the art of diplomacy. Since all military activities have diplomatic impact, it is prudent that ambassador and commander work harmoniously to achieve common purpose. Their interests intersect at the Military Assistance Advisory Group (MAAG) (also called Military Advisory Group, Military Liaison Office, and Office of Defense Coordination) level. The commander of the MAAG, which is an important arm of the country team since it provides training and military equipment to the host country, works for both the ambassador and the COCOM.

In the spectrum from peace to crisis to war, the ambassador will tend to dominate decisions at the lower end of the conflict spectrum. As the environment transitions to war the Commander assumes greater authority and influence. Haiti 1994 is an excellent example of how the handoff from ambassador to COCOM takes place. The American ambassador in Port-au-Prince, William Swing, was in charge of U.S. policy until General Hugh Shelton and the U.S. military forces arrived in September of that year. Once the military phase was completed, policy control

reverted to Swing, thus restoring the normal pattern of authority. In the gray area of military operations other than war, such as Latin America, disputes can arise between ambassadors and COCOMs about jurisdiction over U.S. military personnel in the country. The most illustrative was in 1994 between the Commander in Chief of the U.S. Southern Command, General Barry McCaffrey, and the U.S. Ambassadors to Bolivia, Charles R. Bowers, and Colombia, Morris D. Busby. The dispute had to be adjudicated in Washington by the Secretaries of State and Defense, something the system would rather not do.<sup>31</sup> The fact is that ambassador and COCOM must work closely together to coordinate U.S. military activities. The exception cited here proves the rule of harmony between ambassadors and regional military commanders.

A very promising innovation at the regional command level is the creation at the U.S. Southern Command (USSOUTHCOM) of an entirely new staffing system. It is a creative concept for strategy and American civil-military relations. Accordingly, the COCOM remains a four-star officer, while the deputy COCOM will be a State Department ambassador. At the same time, some of the directorates are headed by civilian Senior Executive Service Officers. In addition, there is a new Partnering Directorate, which works to build bridges with the interagency community in Washington, with the private sector, and with Latin American governments.<sup>32</sup> The adaptations at USSOUTHCOM (and also at the new African Command) respond to the changed security environment in Latin America and the consequent need to address the broad spectrum of human security needs. Poverty, crime, environmental degradation, illegal narcotics, natural disasters, and contraband call for an integrated policy approach that

harnesses all the partners in the U.S. Government and the private sector. In the USSOUTHCOM region, various offices of the Agency for International Development (Transition Initiatives, Conflict Management and Mitigation, Democracy and Governance); the Department of Justice; the Department of the Treasury; the Army Corps of Engineers; the Department of State's Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance; the Office of Population, Refugees, and Migration; the Bureau of International Narcotics and Labor; and the Office of Reconstruction and Stability are the main partners to DoD. This partnership works especially well with the Colombian government in integrating rural communities in Colombia to the national polity through the Coordination Center for Integrated Action.<sup>33</sup>

Another example of interagency creativity is State's Project Horizon. Started in 2005, the Project engages the interagency community to postulate future global scenarios that require integrated strategic planning across the many departments and agencies. The purpose is to develop a common intellectual framework within which the various players can identify their stakes and therefore the capabilities they will need to meet their departmental and agency responsibilities. A shared effort of this kind builds synergies for interagency cooperation and integration.<sup>34</sup>

### **Continuing Challenges in the Interagency.**

The tensions generated by cultural differences, turf, and competition for limited resources will always be part of the interagency process. The diplomatic and the military cultures dominate the national security system, though there are other cultures and even subcultures. The former uses words to solve problems while the latter uses force packages. Cultural differences are

large, but communicating across them is possible.<sup>35</sup> Table 2 compares the cultures of military officers and diplomats.

The principal problem of interagency decisionmaking is *lack of decisive authority; there is no one in charge*. As long as personalities are involved who work well together and have leadership support in the NSC, interagency efforts will prosper, but such congruence is not predictable. The world situation does not wait for the proper alignment of the planets in Washington.

*Asymmetries in resources* are another impediment. The Department of State, which has the responsibility to conduct foreign affairs, is a veritable pauper. Its diplomats may have the best words in town in terms of speaking and writing skills and superb knowledge of foreign countries and foreign affairs, but it is a very small organization that has been getting smaller budget allocations from Congress. In 2008, the foreign service officers corps comprises some 6500 people, which is less than the U.S. Army has in military bands. Compare DoD's budget of nearly \$500 billion (not including the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan) to State's puny \$36 billion (which includes economic and military assistance). The military maintains a personnel float of 11 percent for very good reasons, such as schooling and the need for redundancy. In contrast, State in 2008 had a negative personnel float. State's information technology was, until recently, primitive, and officer professional development of the kind that the military thrives on is not promoted. Moreover, unlike the military, State lacks a strong domestic constituency of support. Curiously, the military has more money to conduct diplomacy than does State. Secretary of State Colin Powell began to improve State's budget. But the inability to hire personnel during the lean years of

<b>Military Officers</b>	<b>Foreign Service Officers</b>
Mission: prepare for and fight war	Mission: conduct diplomacy
Training a major activity, important for units and individuals	Training not a significant activity. Not important either for units or individuals
Extensive training for episodic, undesired events, to think the unthinkable	Little formal training, learning by experience in doing desired activities (negotiating, reporting)
Uncomfortable with ambiguity	Can deal with ambiguity
Plans and planning—both general and detailed—are important core activities	Plan in general terms to achieve objectives but value flexibility and innovation
Doctrine: important	Doctrine: not important
Focused on military element of foreign policy	Focused on all aspects of foreign policy
Focused on discrete events and activities with plans, objectives, courses of action, endstates	Focused on ongoing processes without expectation of an “endstate”
Infrequent real-world contact with opponents or partners in active war fighting	Day-to-day real-world contact with partners and opponents in active diplomacy
Officer corps commands significant numbers of NCOs and enlisted personnel	Officers supervise only other officers in core (political and economic) activities
NCOs and enlisted personnel perform many core functions (war fighting)	Only officers engage in core activity (diplomacy)
Leadership: career professional military officers (within the military services and in operations)	Leadership: a mix of politicians, academics, policy wonks, and career Foreign Service professionals at headquarters and in field
All aspects of peace operations, including civilian/diplomatic, becoming more important	All aspects of peace operations, including military, becoming more important
Writing and written word less important, physical actions more important	Writing and written word very important. Used extensively in conduct of diplomacy
Teamwork and management skills are rewarded, interpersonal skills important internally	Individual achievement and innovative ideas rewarded, inter-personal skills important externally
Understand “humma-humma” and “deconflict”	Understand “demarche” and “non-paper”
Accustomed to large resources, manpower, equipment, and money	Focus meager resources on essential needs

**Table 2. Comparing Military and Foreign Service Officers.**<sup>36</sup>

the 1990s, because of previous budgetary constraints, affected hundreds of positions in the middle ranks of the diplomatic service. State is so short of personnel to staff its various missions abroad that in 2008 there was an initiative in Congress to approve the hiring of 1,100 foreign service officers and add 12 percent to the State budget.

In a role reversal that was becoming habitual, Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates in June 2008 requested money for State, warned against the “creeping militarization” of foreign policy, and lamented that: “America’s civilian institutions of diplomacy and development have been chronically underfunded for far too long relative to what we spend on the military, and . . . the responsibilities our nation has around the world.”<sup>37</sup> He added: “Our diplomatic leaders—be they in ambassadors’ suites or on the seventh floor of the State Department—must have the resource and political support needed to fully exercise their statutory responsibilities in leading American foreign policy.” Something’s amiss when the Secretary of Defense has to request money for the Department of State. Such role reversal indicates that the arsenal of American power is dangerously imbalanced, and the default response is to look to the Pentagon. The United States is increasingly a one-dimensional power. In peace and war the entire government should contribute to protect the wide range of U.S. national interests. These include defense, economic prosperity, safety of U.S. citizens, humanitarian aid, health, environment, climate, refugees, border security, and others.

The *resource barons*, those with people, money, technical expertise, and equipment, reside in DoD and the military services. Consequently, the military, especially the Army, is constantly being asked to provide resources out of hide for nation-building

purposes, for example in Haiti, Panama, and Iraq. It is tempting to reach out to it because it is the only institution with an *expeditionary* capability and fungible resources and expertise. It can get there quickly, show the flag, bring significant resources to bear, stabilize a situation, and create an environment secure enough for other agencies to operate. On a much smaller scale, the Agency for International Development is a baron, because it has money and technical expertise to promote development and institution building. Other baronies exist, such as intelligence, Department of Justice, Commerce, and the Office of National Drug Control Policy.

Finally, the personnel systems of the various agencies of the U.S. Government *do not promote professionalization and rewards in interagency jobs*. What is needed is a systematic effort to develop civilian and military cadres that are experts in interagency policy coordination, integration, and operations. Some of this takes place. Military officers are assigned to various departments. For example, until 2002, 35 officers from all military services worked in the regional and functional bureaus of the Department of State. Senior diplomats, often of ambassadorial rank, are also allocated to military and civilian agencies, such as Foreign Policy Advisors at the regional unified commands, the Special Operations Command, to peacekeeping and humanitarian missions, various key positions in the Pentagon, and the war colleges. These programs must be expanded. Unfortunately, the opposite was occurring in 2003. To convert military personnel slots to warfighting positions, the DoD recalled most of its officers from the civilian agencies, to include the State Department, which in turn reduced to 30 the number of diplomats posted to military organizations. Accordingly, an

important element for interagency integration and harmony was weakened.

Moreover, there ought to be incentives for national security professionalism, as there are for joint duty in the military. For civilian agencies, incentives are needed to encourage interagency service, to include the Department of State. Promotions should be based not only on performance at Foggy Bottom and in embassies, but on mandatory interagency tours as well. Similarly, professional development incentives should apply to civil servants that work in the national security arena.<sup>38</sup> Responding to this need, the *Quadrennial Defense Review* of 2006 recommended strengthening interagency operations by establishing a new National Security Officer career track. It also recommended creation of a "National Security Planning Document" to: "direct the development of both military and nonmilitary plans and institutional capabilities."<sup>39</sup> Moreover, to win the peace, DoD issued guidance to "place stability operations on a par with major combat operations."<sup>40</sup> This should help engender cultural change in the military and promote interagency integration.

Admittedly, mandatory interagency tours would require significant changes in personnel systems and career tracking. The Report of the National Defense Panel of 1997, *Transforming Defense: National Security in the Twenty-first Century*, recommended creating "an interagency cadre of professionals, including civilian and military officers, whose purpose would be to staff key positions in the national security structures."<sup>41</sup> The Report also recommended a national security curriculum for a mix of civilian, military, and foreign students. The Defense Leadership and Management Program of the DoD, a Master's level initiative in national security studies for civilian personnel, is an im-



portant step in this direction. The Department of State, under Colin Powell's guidance, began to invest in educating its personnel in strategic planning. Accordingly, the Department published *The Department of State and Agency for International Development Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years 2004 to 2009*. The document sets forth directions and priorities and supports policy positions enunciated in the President's *National Security Strategy*. This is another breakthrough for strategic integration.

### **Implications for Warriors.**

The future use of power is likely to be more military operations other than war, requiring more mobile, flexible light forces, working in unison with civilians. Future deployments in peace and war will also require a more intellectual military officer, one who understands the imperative of working with the panoply of civilian agencies, nongovernmental organizations, the national and international media, and foreign armed forces. It is a commonplace of strategy that American forces will rarely fight alone again; they will do so in coalition. Thus, the strategic Clausewitzian trinity of the people, the armed forces, and the government now encompasses the global community. The implications are clear; the military officer will have to develop greater diplomatic and negotiating skills, greater understanding of international affairs, capability in foreign languages, and more than a passing acquaintance with economics.

Moreover, the warrior will likely work with civilian counterparts across a spectrum of activities short of war. These include strategic planning and budgeting, humanitarian assistance, peace operations, counternarcotics, counterterrorism, security assistance,

environmental security, human rights, democratization, civil-military relations, arms control, intelligence, war planning and termination strategy, command and control of forces, continuity of government, post-conflict reconstruction, technology transfer, crisis management, overseas basing, alliances, noncombatant evacuations, and homeland defense.

Therefore, the future officer will also need greater appreciation of the institutional diversity and complexity of government, because of the need to advise a diverse audience of civilians on the utility of military power in complex contingencies that are neither peace nor war. He or she will have to work in tandem with civilian agencies and nongovernmental organizations unaccustomed to command systems and deliberate planning, and that often do not understand the limits of military power.<sup>42</sup> Lastly, instruction on the interagency system and process should be mandatory for civilians and military alike. Such education must have a sound theoretical foundation in national security decisionmaking, strategic planning, and organizational behavior, expanded by sophisticated case studies. Because the United States will be heavily engaged in the spectrum of activities entitled humanitarian intervention, stabilization and reconstruction, and the transformation of societies, the curriculum of senior service colleges must emphasize the strategic integration of the instruments of power to a much greater degree.

What attributes should the military officer bring? Above all, holistic thinking, the ability to think in terms of all the instruments of national power and respect for the functions and cultures of diverse departments and agencies. Communication skills are paramount. The effective interagency player writes and speaks well.

He or she will be bilingual, able to function in military as well as civilian English. Bureaucratic jargon is the enemy of interagency communication. The military briefing, though an excellent vehicle for quickly transmitting a lot of information in formatted style, is not acceptable. One must be less conscious of rank because ranks will vary among the representatives around a table. Someone of lower rank may be in charge of a meeting. A sense of humor, patience, endurance, and tolerance for ambiguity and indecisiveness will help. The ability to “stay in your box” and articulate the perspective of your department will be respected. The ability to anticipate issues, to consider the second and third order effects from the national level down to the country team and theater levels, will be invaluable. Finally, the interagency requires diplomatic and negotiating skills, the ability to network, and mastery of the nuances of bureaucratic politics and language.<sup>43</sup>

The most evolved democracy in the world has the most cumbersome national security decisionmaking process. Inefficiency is the price the founding fathers imposed for democratic accountability. But some of the inefficiency is the result of American strategic culture, with its multiplicity of players, plentiful but diffused resources coupled with the penchant to throw resources at the problem, and the propensity to segment peace and diplomacy from war and military power.

Democracy is defined as a process of mutual learning and adaptation. All institutions of government learn, adapt, and make appropriate changes. This is even more imperative for the national security agencies and personnel, where the stakes are high. The distempers in the interagency process evidenced since 2001 created new opportunities for learning and for adaptation. Fortunately, in time American democracy will make

those adaptations. The question will be at what price and how quickly.

## ENDNOTES - CHAPTER 1

1. Special thanks for their insights to Anthony Williams, David Bennett, Frank Jones, Gary Maybarduk, and Dennis Skocz. They helped illuminate the labyrinthine ways of Washington. The project was generously supported by Erik Kjonnerod, Director of National Defense University's Inter Agency Transformation Education and Analysis Program, and Robin Dorff, Chairman of the Department of National Security and Strategy, U.S. Army War College.

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assessing the political implications of military planning and strategy and in serving as the principal source of counsel on international issues to their respective Commanders-in-Chief – the deep level of commitment and cooperation acknowledged by the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Defense in executing foreign and security policy established by the President. For how an embassy functions, see Shawn Dorman, ed., *Inside a U.S. Embassy: How the Foreign Service Works for America*, Washington, DC: American Foreign Service Association, 2003.

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## CHAPTER 2

### CONSTRUCTING THE IRON CAGE: THE 1947 NATIONAL SECURITY ACT<sup>1</sup>

Douglas Stuart

#### Introduction.

Proponents and critics of sociologically-informed approaches to the study of international relations agree on one thing: There is a need for more empirical research on the circumstances under which “conceptions of self and interest” which guide a nation’s foreign policy are institutionalized.<sup>2</sup> One reason why there are still very few studies of the genesis of a nation’s foreign policy is the traditional historiographic problem of infinite regression. (Should a study of the ideational and institutional elements of German *Weltpolitik* begin with Bismarck’s arrival in 1862 or his removal in 1890?) From time to time, however, history provides us with a relatively unambiguous starting point for a particular story. The Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, is one such event. This incident had such a powerful generative effect on the U.S. national security bureaucracy that we are justified in calling this network of institutions the “Pearl Harbor system.” This monograph will identify the defining elements of the Pearl Harbor system, by recourse to the debates which took place between 1941 and the passage of the 1947 National Security Act (NSA). The participants in these debates were, in the truest sense, “present at the creation” of an entirely new approach to American foreign policy.<sup>3</sup> I will discuss how the interplay of their differing goals, concerns, and interests culminated in this extraordinarily ambitious piece of legislation.

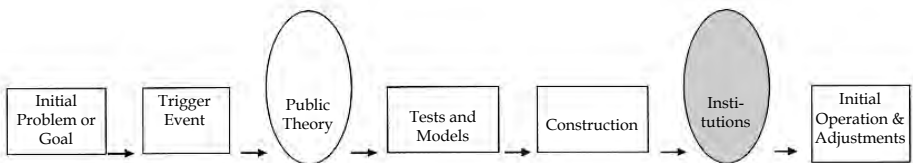
In a forthcoming book, I argue that the 1947 National Security Act is the second most important piece of legislation in modern American history (second only to the 1964 Civil Rights Act).<sup>4</sup> This single piece of omnibus legislation created the National Military Establishment (which became the Department of Defense [DoD] in 1949) as well as the office of the Secretary of Defense. It gave a statutory identity to the Joint Chiefs of Staff and established the Air Force as a separate military service. It created the National Security Council (NSC) and the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), as well as four other institutions which are less well known (the National Security Resources Board, the Research and Development Board, the War Council and the Munitions Board).

The system created in 1947 served U.S. interests for over 4 decades, but with the end of the Cold War some experts argued that key elements of the national security bureaucracy were in need of fundamental reform.<sup>5</sup> The fact that no such reform occurred during the 1990s is attributable to both institutional resistance and lack of motivation on the part of both the legislative and executive branches of government.

In the wake of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 (9/11), the nation no longer lacked motivation. *The 9/11 Commission Report* concluded that “Americans should not settle for incremental, ad hoc adjustment to a system designed generations ago for a world that no longer exists.”<sup>6</sup> To date, however, each attempt at institutional reform has focused on a particular part of the Pearl Harbor system rather than on the system itself. There is a need for a more synthetic view of the defining concepts and structures of the Pearl Harbor system, as a point of reference for future debates about comprehensive reform.

This monograph will survey the events and discussions which culminated in the passage of the 1947 National Security Act. I will develop my arguments around a five-stage model of institutional design: (1) Initial problem or goal, (2) Impetus or trigger event, (3) Tests and models, (4) Construction, and (5) Initial operation and adjustments.

As illustrated in Figure 1, I envision a process in which an initial problem or goal combines with a trigger event to create a **public theory** which guides the search for relevant tests and models and culminates in the construction of a new network of **institutions**. This linear process of institutional design is completed by an initial shake-out period, during which the new institutions compete with each other, and with the established network of bureaucratic actors, to carve out areas of responsibility and authority. As a result of this shake-out process, some new institutions survive in the form that they were created, some undergo fundamental revision, and some are eliminated. Hopefully this template will prove useful for the study of other cases of institutional design. At minimum, it will provide some insights into the way that America changed, and was then changed by, the structures and processes which guided its foreign and defense policies.



**Figure 1. Institutional Design.**

## Initial Problem or Goal.

Throughout the 19th century, U.S. policymakers had, in fact, enjoyed the benefits of insularity. According to Arnold Wolfers, "... external attack and invasion were unlikely contingencies most of the time, so that self-preservation in the strict sense of the term rarely came to place restrictions on the leeway they enjoyed in respect to other policy objectives."<sup>7</sup> Largely as a result of their relative isolation from world affairs, American leaders were able to pursue a sophisticated and successful foreign policy, managed by the State Department and guided by reliable calculations of national interest.<sup>8</sup> It is not surprising that Americans tried to hold onto this very attractive situation, even after their nation had failed to stay out of World War I. A majority of citizens during the interwar period were still convinced that America was an "insular" nation, and, as John Gaddis has observed, the United States "... came closer during the late 1930s to *hiding* in the face of threats than it had done at any point since the years preceding the War of 1812."<sup>9</sup>

By the end of the 1930s, however, some policymakers and experts were becoming increasingly concerned about America's vulnerability, for two reasons: the global spread of dictatorial regimes, and revolutionary changes in war fighting technologies. In the 1937 edition of *Liberty and the Modern State*, Harold Laski summarized the political problem as follows: "In the seven years since this book was first published, the condition of liberty has visibly deteriorated over most of the civilized world."<sup>10</sup> Many commentators worried that the age of democracy was coming to a close, and that modernity itself favored dictatorship.

As Hans Morgenthau would later explain, "The modern totalitarian state has been able to fill the gap between government and people . . . through the use of democratic symbols, totalitarian control of public opinion, and policies actually or seemingly benefiting the people."<sup>11</sup> Dictatorial regimes were also considered to pose a special problem for democracies because they were economically competitive. At a time when the U.S. economy seemed to be inextricably mired in the great depression, the American media frequently gushed over the productivity and administrative efficiency of totalitarian regimes. By contrast, the American economy was frequently described as "mature," a term which was meant to be pejorative, implying both sclerosis and senescence.

Franklin Roosevelt was deeply concerned about the apparent political and economic advantages of totalitarianism. Indeed, shortly before his inauguration in 1933, Walter Lippmann warned President Franklin D. Roosevelt (FDR) that "The situation is critical, Franklin. You may have no alternative but to assume dictatorial power."<sup>12</sup> While the President had no intention of overthrowing the Constitution, he did what he could within limits imposed by politics and public opinion to replicate those aspects of totalitarianism which he associated with enhanced efficiency—including massive public works programs, centralization, and national planning.<sup>13</sup>

Roosevelt was also convinced that dictatorial regimes were inherently predisposed to aggression, both as a means of consolidating their internal authority and expanding their power abroad. This posed a special problem for the United States, according to FDR, because Americans could no longer assume that they were protected by two oceans from the vicissitudes of



international relations. As a member of the American Geographical Society, the President followed closely the debates associated with the “new geopolitics,” which emphasized the importance of technology in overcoming traditional limitations of time and space. Improvements in air power were of special importance to this community, and the fact that many of these innovations were taking place in Germany contributed to the sense of emergency.

In the period just prior to World War II, a few experts attempted to capture this sense of national emergency with a relatively new term—national security. This phrase was virtually unknown prior to the 20th century. It gained some national attention in 1915 with the appearance of the National Security League, which was established to encourage national military preparedness. The League grew to over 90,000 members during World War I, but then gradually evaporated during the interwar period.<sup>14</sup> By the late 1930s, a small group of commentators began to use the term in a systematic and consistent way to draw attention to the changing nature of America’s international situation. It is worth emphasizing that the concept of national security was attractive to these individuals in part because it represented an alternative to the previously dominant concept—national interest. By the 1930s, there was a widespread sense that national interest was an unreliable guide to U.S. foreign policy because it had proven to be easily co-opted by special interests prior to and during the Great War. Various official studies (most notably, the Nye Committee hearings) and popular revisionist books had contributed to a pervasive belief that the “merchants of death” had led the United States into World War I for their own selfish reasons. Furthermore, both the State Department and

Congress were considered to be particularly vulnerable to pressure from these parochial interests.

No prewar writer was more effective than Edward Pendleton Herring at both critiquing the concept of national interest and making the case for the alternative concept of national security. His 1941 study of *The Impact of War* was particularly important, because it presented a forceful argument for comprehensive change in the way U.S. leaders thought about, and managed, foreign affairs. Herring claimed that as a result of the nation's fortuitous geographical situation Americans had developed a bifurcated approach to international relations. During periods of peace, the State Department was expected to run foreign affairs, and the armed services were left out of the policymaking process. Conversely, the War Department (Army) and the Navy were expected to play a dominant role in policymaking during major wars, but as soon as peace was restored, the military was expected to relinquish its influence within Washington.<sup>15</sup> Herring argued that America's "persistent suspicion of militarism" was increasingly naïve and dangerous. "Air power means that the globe has shrunk. Mechanized warfare means that armies of industry are in conflict. . . . The margins of safety that our democracy has known have been cut away."<sup>16</sup> Under these changed circumstances, Washington needed to establish a permanent and influential place for the military at the top of the policymaking community. A strong military influence was essential for the development of new modes of thinking about world affairs, based on the concept of national security.

## Trigger Event.

Herring's book was published 3 months before the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. No event in U.S. history has had a greater impact upon the American people and their government. John Gaddis has argued that ". . . surprise attacks tend to sweep away old conceptions of national security and what it takes to achieve it."<sup>17</sup> What made Pearl Harbor unique was that it actually **established** the concept of national security as the lodestar of American foreign policy. In the jargon of the new institutionalism, national security became the public theory which served as the necessary precondition for the social construction of a wholly new institutional infrastructure.<sup>18</sup> Once this infrastructure was in place, it then helped to reinforce and elucidate the public theory.

According to Gordon Prange, the U.S. public reacted to Pearl Harbor ". . . with a mind-staggering mixture of surprise, awe, mystification, grief, humiliation, and, above all, cataclysmic fury."<sup>19</sup> It took the American people and their leaders about 5 years to distill this complex mix of emotions into a few policy-relevant and universally accepted "lessons." The process of post-attack fact finding (and fault finding) progressed throughout the war and reached a high point during the immediate postwar period, with congressional hearings which ran from November 1945 to May 1946. The hearings generated 15,000 pages of transcribed testimony, plus an appendix of nearly 10,000 pages from seven other official inquiries into the disaster.<sup>20</sup> The most important general conclusion of these investigations was that America could never again allow itself to be "sucker punched" by another country. The attack on Pearl Harbor also highlighted inexcusable gaps within

the U.S. policymaking community:

- Between the entities responsible for the collection of raw intelligence and the entities responsible for its analysis, dissemination and application.
- Between, and within, the two military services.
- Between the civilian and military leadership.

Specific government agencies also drew their own conclusions from the Pearl Harbor disaster. For the Army and Navy, Pearl Harbor reinforced already strong doubts about the reliability of the State Department as a strategic partner. Mark Stoler notes that “. . . many officers saw [Secretary of State] Hull and his associates as the real culprits” in the Pearl Harbor story.<sup>21</sup> The military held State responsible for precipitating Japanese aggression by pursuing a policy of confrontation and pressure against Tokyo at a time when the armed forces were hoping to delay the start of war until they had fortified their bases in the Pacific theater.

After December 7, 1941, Pendleton Herring's arguments were universally recognized as common sense. “No More Pearl Harbors” was understood as the non-negotiable mandate for future U.S. policymakers. This translated into an expectation that the government would continuously monitor antidemocratic and military trends across the globe, identify any potential aggressors, and either discourage them from attacking us or be prepared to strike back, massively and decisively, as soon as an attack occurred.

“No more Pearl Harbors” also implied vigilance on the home front. In justifying his decision for the wartime internment of Japanese-Americans, Secretary of War Henry Stimson asserted that, following Pearl Harbor, “Japanese raids on the west coast seemed

not only possible but probable . . . and it was quite impossible to be sure that the raiders would not receive important help from individuals of Japanese origin.”<sup>22</sup> As the war progressed, the government became even more concerned about fifth columnists, as secrecy surrounding the Manhattan Project became increasingly important and increasingly difficult. Whatever mechanisms for the management of national security were to be created at the end of the war, they would have to be capable of identifying and coping with domestic, as well as international, threats.

### **Tests and Models.**

But first, the United States had to win the peace. World War II provided Washington with the opportunity and the impetus to experiment with new institutions for the management of national security. And no president in American history was more inclined to experiment than Roosevelt.

Many of the national security agencies which FDR created were modeled upon British institutions which became familiar to the President and his advisers as a result of the close Anglo-American wartime relationship. For example, the British played an indispensable role in the creation of America’s wartime intelligence system. The United States had been studying British institutions and procedures for covert activity and intelligence gathering and analysis since World War I. In the immediate pre-World War II period, however, London began to actively encourage intelligence cooperation with Washington as part of a campaign to draw the United States into the war. The British even set up a training school for the first wave of recruits for the U.S. Coordinator of Information (COI), which was

established in 1941 and replaced a year later by the Office of Strategic Services (OSS). Throughout the war, OSS often found it easier to obtain information from Britain's Secret Intelligence Service (SIS) than from the older American intelligence agencies associated with the War, Navy, and State Departments.<sup>23</sup> The problem of interagency intelligence sharing would persist into the postwar era, in spite of the cautionary lesson of Pearl Harbor.

British institutions had an even more direct impact on the development of U.S. wartime arrangements for interservice cooperation. According to the official Department of the Army history, the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) “. . . sprang up almost accidentally” in response to the perceived need for a corporate body capable of working with the British Chiefs of Staff.<sup>24</sup> Prior to World War II, the Army and Navy relied upon the Joint Board and the Army-Navy Joint Munitions Board to facilitate cooperation regarding planning and procurement issues, respectively. These institutions frequently served as little more than venues for the airing of incompatible positions. At their first wartime meeting with their British counterparts (the Arcadia Conference, which began on December 22, 1941), it became very clear to U.S. military leaders that they were at a distinct disadvantage in these bilateral discussions because of their lack of coordination. By February, the JCS was holding official meetings and developing plans for the creation of its own staff.

It took another 5 months for Roosevelt to accept Army Chief of Staff George Marshall's recommendation for the creation of a Chairman of the Joint Chiefs. When FDR did appoint Admiral William Leahy to this position, he made it clear that he was not creating a powerful new military leader (along the lines of the

German General Staff model). Leahy was designated as the President's liaison with the Joint Chiefs, although the Admiral also served as *ex officio* chairman of those JCS meetings which he attended. Marshall would later admit that Leahy's designation as Roosevelt's "leg man" was not what he had in mind when he initially envisioned the position of JCS Chairman.<sup>25</sup> This wartime arrangement nonetheless served as a point of reference for an extended postwar debate over the need for a "real" military Chief of Staff.

General Marshall also recognized early in the war that the British had a great advantage over their American counterparts in terms of overall coordination between the civilian and military branches of government. In a confidential letter to James Byrnes, who was serving as Director of War Mobilization, Marshall complained that British war planners "... are connected up with other branches of their Government through an elaborate but most closely knit Secretariat. On our side there is no such animal and we suffer accordingly..."<sup>26</sup>

The mechanism which the British relied upon to facilitate civilian-military cooperation was the War Cabinet, a subgroup of the Committee on Imperial Defence (CID) which had been established in 1904 to manage the complex administrative and logistical challenges of the British Empire. During the first half of the war, proposals for replicating the British War Cabinet foundered on the aforementioned military doubts about the State Department's reliability, which the President tended to share. As the tide of war turned, however, and U.S. planners began to confront issues of postwar reconstruction and occupation, it became increasingly apparent that some mechanism needed to be developed to facilitate strategic cooperation at the highest levels of the Foreign Service and the War

and Navy Departments. In November 1944 the three agencies agreed to establish the State-War-Navy Coordinating Committee (SWNCC). Over the next 2 1/2 years, SWNCC evolved into an important source of wartime and postwar policy advice. Its deliberations also presaged a trend, however, which would be accelerated after the passage of the 1947 National Security Act. By the simple fact that the armed services outnumbered State two-to-one within SWNCC, the institution came gradually to be dominated by the military. It may be an exaggeration to claim, as Alan Ciamporero has, that “. . . SWNCC skewed American policy toward military solutions to political problems.”<sup>27</sup> The Committee nonetheless helped to prepare the Washington policy community for a new national security system in which the military’s point of view was accorded a permanent and influential position, often at the expense of State.

It would be difficult to overestimate the role that British institutions played in shaping U.S. thinking about the management of national security. But British institutions were also misleading models for U.S. planners. As both FDR and Truman noted during the war, these agencies were designed to serve a parliamentary political system and could not be easily adapted to serve a presidential form of democracy. During the latter stages of the war, Truman’s staff had looked closely at the CID and War Cabinet models. White House staffer George Elsey’s record of his April 9, 1945, meeting with a representative of the War Cabinet Secretariat notes that “Churchill [takes] no action without War Cabinet,” whose members have “mutual group responsibility” for the management of the war effort at home and abroad.<sup>28</sup> Although both Roosevelt and Truman were suspicious of the Parliamentary model, what Paul Hammond would



later dub the “cabinet fallacy” exercised a powerful influence on the thinking of many people in Washington who dominated the postwar debate about institutional reform.<sup>29</sup>

World War II also provided one important negative lesson for the postwar architects of national security. It overturned the widely-held prewar belief that centrally controlled economies were significantly more efficient than laissez-faire systems. During the first half of the war, FDR experimented with various administrative arrangements to facilitate mobilization and supply, but he resisted pressure from the media and members of Congress for the creation of a mobilization “czar” to control the American economy. It was not until May 1943 that Roosevelt established a strong mobilization agency (the Office of War Mobilization), and when he did so, he located it within the executive office of the President and made sure that it was directed by one of his closest advisers, James Byrnes. Byrnes soon became known as the “assistant president,” but he continued to respect, and protect, the competitive and capitalist elements of the American economy for the rest of the war.

The wisdom of FDR’s decision to avoid excessive economic centralization was confirmed by victory. Pendleton Herring chaired the committee established by the Bureau of the Budget to write the official administrative history of the War. The report concluded that:

Our reluctance to establish even the semblance of autocratic rule may have been partly responsible for our constant struggle to coordinate or harmonize a mobilization effort made up of many separately operating parts, but problems of coordination do not disappear even in an autocratic administration, and we developed methods that produced effective end results.<sup>30</sup>

The findings of the Herring Report were welcomed by the American people, since they validated what Aaron Friedberg has called "a strong and widely shared presumption in favor of the market over the state. . . ." <sup>31</sup>

### **Construction.**

Roosevelt's wartime experiments with national security planning provided useful points of reference for those individuals who became actively involved in the postwar debates about comprehensive reform of the Washington bureaucracy. The highly publicized Pearl Harbor hearings also provided an impetus for reform. All parties accepted the aforementioned mandate of "no more Pearl Harbors." There was considerable disagreement, however, about how to accomplish it.

The most intense disputes took place over the issue of armed forces unification. This controversy eclipsed all of the other debates which culminated in the 1947 National Security Act. By the end of the war almost the entire War Department leadership was convinced that unification was both essential and inevitable, in light of fundamental changes in the strategic environment. According to a 1943 report by the Army's Special Planning Division: "This war is, and future wars undoubtedly will be, largely a series of combined operations in each of which ground, air, and sea forces must be employed together and coordinated under one directing head." <sup>32</sup> Under these circumstances, Army leaders believed that national security demanded the complete merger of the Army and Navy into a single service, as well as a peacetime Joint Chiefs of Staff headed by a Chief of Staff who would serve as the principal military adviser to the President.

The Navy leadership did not share the Army's enthusiasm for full unification. While some influential

admirals (most notably, Chester W. Nimitz and William F. Halsey, Jr.) had expressed support for the principle of unification during the war, the postwar Navy leadership under Secretary of the Navy James Forrestal worried that merger would undermine the tradition of autonomy which the Navy had cultivated and protected for more than 150 years. Forrestal and his colleagues were also concerned that the Army would be able to use the new arrangement, in collaboration with the supporters of land based air power, to undermine or eliminate the Navy's air wing and the Marine Corps. Along with these very practical institutional concerns, Navy leaders also warned that unification and the creation of a strong Chief of Staff would set in motion an antidemocratic trend toward military domination of the U.S. Government.<sup>33</sup>

By the summer of 1945, the momentum in support of unification seemed irresistible. Not only had the War Department orchestrated an impressive public campaign, but the new President had made it clear that he considered unification to be one of his top priorities. In an article published shortly before he became President, Harry Truman called for "one department under one authoritative, responsible head" and expressed confidence that "under such a set-up, another Pearl Harbor will not have to be feared."<sup>34</sup> The President also supported the Army's call for continuation of the JCS and the creation of an influential Chief of Staff.

Secretary Forrestal recognized that the Navy faced a serious public relations problem because it seemed to contribute nothing to the unification debate except a curmudgeonly resistance to innovation. To solve this problem, he asked his long-time friend Ferdinand Eberstadt, an influential Wall Street lawyer, to oversee

a study which would change the terms of the debate by placing the issue of armed forces unification in the context of comprehensive institutional reform. Eberstadt pulled together a team of about 30 experts, including Pendleton Herring, and completed his study over the summer of 1945. The report drew lessons from corporate America and from other governments in order to develop the case against armed forces unification. "Our present situation calls for action far more drastic and far-reaching than simply unification of the military services. It calls for a complete realignment (sic) of our governmental organizations to serve our national security. . . ." <sup>35</sup>

The Eberstadt Report was designed to shift the focus of the debate from the military, per se, to civilian-military coordination at the top of the Washington policy community. It not only opposed merger of the armed services, it omitted any reference to a Defense Department or a Secretary of Defense. Citing the British CID and SWNCC as models, it recommended the creation of a small committee, the National Security Council (NSC), which would be chaired by the President and bring together the Secretaries of State, War, Navy, and Air (proposed as a new, independent Department) to coordinate foreign and defense policies and advise the White House on matters of national security. The Report also recommended the establishment of a National Security Resources Board (NSRB) to prepare the U.S. economy for rapid mobilization in the event of an imminent or actual attack. The Chairman of the NSRB was included as a statutory member of the proposed National Security Council. The NSC would be served by a small secretariat, "headed by a full-time executive" and by a new CIA which would provide the "grist" for NSC discussions in the form of "complete,

up-to-date, and accurate intelligence, properly analyzed and made available in useable form.”<sup>36</sup> It was assumed by Eberstadt’s team that the CIA would rely upon the established intelligence services for the bulk of its information, although no arrangements were made for insuring their compliance. In deference to the widespread concern about the creation of a postwar “Gestapo” in the United States, the report also made it clear that the CIA’s mandate would only apply to foreign intelligence activities.

The Eberstadt Report also supported the idea of giving the JCS a permanent statutory identity. By placing it under the authority of the NSC, however, the authors sought to ensure that the JCS would remain firmly under civilian authority. The report recognized that the President should have the option of adding a Chief of Staff to the JCS, but in subsequent testimony Eberstadt made it clear that his model for a Chief of Staff was Admiral William D. Leahy, who had served as a liaison between the White House and the Joint Chiefs, rather than as a “super chief” with direct control over the other service chiefs.

Paul Hammond associated Eberstadt’s vision of an NSC designed for collective decisionmaking with the aforementioned cabinet fallacy: “The idea that a committee of some kind could assume some major burdens of the Presidency.”<sup>37</sup> In fact, Eberstadt’s whole approach to postwar security planning reflected these assumptions. Eberstadt’s experiences in the business world had convinced him that the best way to manage a complex social organization was to establish a network of institutions which allowed “good men” who recognize a mutual interest in achieving some common goal to develop habits of cooperation. To the extent possible, such systems were to be voluntary,

with only as much central control as was needed to facilitate negotiations.<sup>38</sup> Based on this formula, the Eberstadt Report envisioned a postwar system of interlocking agencies which would encourage both healthy competition and cooperation. The NSC was to be the “keystone” of this arrangement, with primary responsibility for ensuring strategic coordination at the highest levels of government. Forrestal was fully supportive of this vision. There was nonetheless a great deal of ambivalence in both men’s approach to fundamental reform, since they both expressed the conviction that national security was too important to be allowed to become the captive of intransigent parochial interests. Over the next decade, the challenge of squaring this circle would become an increasing source of frustration for Eberstadt, and over the next 4 years it would come to overwhelm Forrestal.

Harry Truman was also deeply ambivalent about the relative merits of horizontal and vertical systems of administration, but he came at the problem from the other side. Both on constitutional and personal grounds, he was viscerally opposed to any system which threatened to steal, or leach, power from the President. But Truman was also too much of a politician not to appreciate that public policy demanded continuous compromise. While he was committed to a system in which “the buck stops” in his office, he was also convinced that such an arrangement would collapse if it depended too heavily upon presidential micro-management. With specific reference to Eberstadt’s proposal for an NSC-dominated system, the President felt that there was “much to this idea” in part because he had positive experiences working with SWNCC at the end of the war. Truman and his advisers were nonetheless alert to the possibility that the “Navy

Plan" might be more compatible with the British than the American system of government. As he noted in his memoirs, "Under our system the responsibility rests on one man—the President. To change it we would have to change the Constitution, and I think we are doing very well under our Constitution."<sup>39</sup> Truman was therefore willing to consider some form of NSC at the top of a new national security system, but he and his assistants monitored the evolving debates for any signs that the proposed agency posed a threat to the President's constitutional authority.

Eberstadt's model of an NSC-dominated system gave the Navy the ammunition that it needed to organize a counteroffensive against the Army's (and Truman's) plan for armed forces unification. Over the next 2 years, Forrestal worked with the Navy's sponsors in Congress to resist unification. The Navy Secretary's activities during this period often verged on insubordination, but Truman had informed the members of his cabinet that they were free to express their personal views on unification, as long as they prefaced their remarks with an accurate summary of the official White House position on this matter. Forrestal's first victory occurred in May 1946, when Truman agreed to drop the idea of a powerful Chief of Staff to oversee the armed forces. The President was actually discouraged by Leahy, whose wartime experience had convinced him that the position posed a threat to American democracy. Truman concluded that the idea "was too much along the lines of the 'man on horseback' philosophy."<sup>40</sup>

Over the next year, as Truman's popularity continued to decline, the President began to view the battle for armed forces unification as a political albatross.<sup>41</sup> He was anxious for closure as quickly and

painlessly as possible. He relied upon Forrestal and Secretary of War Robert P. Patterson to work out a reasonable compromise that could gain the approval of the "damned 80th Congress." After a torturous process of negotiations, a deal was reached which gave the Navy most of what it wanted. The system created by the 1947 National Security Act was similar in many respects to the Eberstadt plan: It preserved the institutional autonomy of the Army and Navy, and it favored interservice coordination over centralization. The Navy leadership was not pleased that, in accordance with the recommendations of the Eberstadt Report, the legislation established the Air Force as an independent military service. On the other hand, the Navy's friends succeeded in inserting in the legislation specific protections for Navy Air and for the Marine Corps.

The legislation reflected the Eberstadt Report's thesis that national security was too complex and comprehensive a concept to be addressed at the level of the armed forces. It required coordination at the top, through the mechanism of the National Security Council, with the President as *ex officio* Chairman. The permanent members of the NSC were to be the Secretary of Defense, the three Service Secretaries, the Secretary of State, and the Chairman of the proposed National Security Resources Board. The President was authorized to add other cabinet members to the NSC, and to designate a member of the Council as Chairman in his absence.

This last arrangement was, in fact, a controversial matter, which was only resolved in the final days before the NSA was passed. Up until that point some legislators had attempted to designate the new Secretary of Defense as the President's *ex officio* stand-in on the



NSC. James Forrestal, who was chosen by Truman as the first Secretary of Defense, was particularly attracted to this idea, because he believed that it was within the NSC-dominated system, rather than within the defense community, that the Secretary of Defense would be able to exercise real power over national security. This helps to explain why Forrestal accepted the position of Secretary of Defense when he knew better than almost anyone else how limited this individual's power would be within the National Military Establishment (NME). It also helps to explain why Forrestal became so frustrated with the new position so soon after taking office—once Truman made it clear that he did not intend to designate the Secretary of Defense as his surrogate within the NSC.

The failure to achieve armed forces unification represented a major political defeat for Truman. The President nonetheless made the most of a bad situation by focusing on those aspects of the legislation which reflected his priorities. First, and most importantly, the Act gave a nod to the principle of unification by creating a NME to coordinate the activities of the separate military services. The NME was to be headed by a civilian Secretary of Defense who was expected to “exercise general direction, authority, and control” over the military, including supervision of the budget process.<sup>42</sup> Even a superficial reading of the legislation was sufficient, however, to highlight the difficulties that the Secretary would face in fulfilling this mandate, since the three services preserved their departmental identities, with civilian Secretaries who were authorized to go over the head of the new Secretary of Defense—to the President or the Budget Director—on any issue affecting their service. To facilitate cooperation, the legislation placed the JCS (with a small Joint Staff)

within the NME, along with a Munitions Board, a Research and Development Board, and a War Council. These agencies were expected to provide the Secretary of Defense with “strong ligaments” for interservice coordination while preserving innovation and *esprit de corps* within each service.

By the time the legislation was passed, the President had also decided, in principle, to accept the NSC. Truman still harbored real concerns about this innovation, however, some of which were encouraged by George Marshall. In one of his first memos as Secretary of State, Marshall attempted to convince Truman to press for the removal of the NSC from the draft legislation on the grounds that it would constitute a “second cabinet” which would infringe on the constitutionally-designated powers of the President. Marshall also claimed that the proposed NSC would pose a threat to the constitutionally-designated office of the Secretary of State, since the permanent membership of the new organization (composed of four representatives of the NME and only two other civilian representatives beside the President) would inevitably favor the military. Under these circumstances, the Secretary of State was in danger of becoming an “automaton” of the NSC.<sup>43</sup>

Truman was sensitive to the “second cabinet” argument, but rather than directly oppose the NSC, he pressed for changes in the draft legislation. The function of the Council was changed from “. . . to integrate our foreign and military policies” to “. . . to advise the President with respect to the integration” of national security policies. The President also resolved, on the advice of the Bureau of the Budget, not to attend NSC meetings on a regular basis so that he “could best preserve his full freedom of action with respect to NSC policy recommendations.”<sup>44</sup> Finally, Truman

decided to designate the Secretary of State, rather than the Secretary of Defense, as his surrogate within the NSC.<sup>45</sup>

The President was also willing to support, and take credit for, the creation of the CIA as a subordinate agency of the NSC. The Agency, with a Director of Central Intelligence (DCI) as its head, was given responsibility for "coordinating the intelligence activities of the several Government departments and agencies in the interest of national security."<sup>46</sup> It was assumed that since the major departments with intelligence branches were represented in the NSC, they would recognize an interest in facilitating interagency cooperation. In the case of the one executive branch agency which was deeply involved in intelligence activities but not represented on the NSC, the legislation stipulated that the DCI would have to make a written request to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) for any needed information. Effective lobbying by the FBI also contributed to the decision not to permit the CIA to have "police, subpoena, law-enforcement powers, or internal security functions." The firewalls which were created by the National Security Act to prohibit the CIA from engaging in domestic intelligence activities were understandable, in light of the aforementioned concern about a postwar "Gestapo." They nonetheless created a structural problem at the top of the new system, since the CIA was expected to provide the NSC with the "grist" for its decisionmaking, but the NSC's mandate extended to both domestic and international issues of national security.

After 3 years of high-level haggling, all parties had reason to be dissatisfied with portions of the legislation which was rushed through Congress on July 26, the last day before summer recess. President

Truman had reason to be especially disappointed, but he was nonetheless realistic about the process. With specific reference to his primary interest in armed forces unification he observed that: "We can't always start out with a complete and finished organization; we must remember that since 1798 there has been a Navy Department and since the beginning of the Republic there has been a War Department . . . It is hard to work on a bureaucracy like that."<sup>47</sup> The President was satisfied, however, that his administration had put in place a new system which, regardless of its flaws, responded to the general mandate of "no more Pearl Harbors."

### **Initial Operation and Adjustments.**

Any study of institutional design must allow for some period of road testing, since many agencies do not survive their first few years of operation and many more undergo fundamental changes in light of unforeseen developments. Both institutional failure and structural adjustment are most likely to occur for completely new agencies which must carve out their turf at the expense of established organizations. The period from 1947 to 1960 can be viewed as the shake-out period for the Pearl Harbor system. By the time the Kennedy administration arrived in office, the national security agencies which were strong enough to survive were well established within Washington, and those agencies which were either too frail or naively ambitious had disappeared. Furthermore, by 1960 the Washington policy community had adapted to a world view in which national security had completely supplanted national interest as the "one guiding star" in the formulation and management of U.S. foreign policy.<sup>48</sup>

Amy Zegart has argued that the system created by the 1947 National Security Act was “flawed by design.”<sup>49</sup> It is certainly true that some of the inherent defects of the Pearl Harbor system were obvious to all parties at the time that the NSA was passed. But most people agreed with the President that the legislation was a sensible, and necessary, first step. As C. P. Trussell noted in *The New York Times*: “The measure was conceded to be experimental. It was agreed that it might require refinement later, as dictated by trial operations.”<sup>50</sup>

The NME was the first component of the 1947 system to exhibit serious design flaws. Shortly after accepting the position of Secretary of Defense, Forrestal predicted that he would probably require “. . . the combined attention of [Bishop] Fulton Sheen and the entire psychiatric profession by the end of another year.”<sup>51</sup> In fact, the system began to break down almost immediately. One of the first salvoes in what soon became an interservice war was an Army memo, dated August 11, 1947, which was designed to guide planning for a future war. In its survey of the respective responsibilities of the three services, the memo failed to include any offensive role for the Navy.<sup>52</sup> The three services were soon engaged in very public arguments over roles, missions and budgets, which Forrestal seemed powerless to control. Within a year, Forrestal was actively seeking the support of members of the Truman administration, Congress, and the Hoover Commission for changes to the NSA which would enhance the direct authority of the Secretary of Defense over the services. In August 1949, amendments were approved which transformed the National Military Establishment into DoD. The wording of the legislation was changed in order to bolster the

Secretary's "direction, authority, and control" over the new Department, and to give the Secretary explicit control over the budgetary process. More importantly, the Service Secretaries were removed from the cabinet and from the National Security Council, and lost their direct access to the President. These very substantial changes were followed by further refinements of the Secretary of Defense's authority during the Eisenhower era. Taken together, these reforms laid the groundwork for a significant expansion of the powers of the Secretary of Defense and the Office of Secretary of Defense during the Kennedy and Johnson administrations. According to Lawrence Korb, "The power of the Secretary of Defense reached its zenith" during this era, and since then the Secretaries have "been as powerful, really, as they have wanted to be."<sup>53</sup>

The 1949 amendments to the NSA also sought to improve decisionmaking within the JCS by establishing the position of Chairman and expanding the Joint Staff. The Chairman was expected to serve as a nonvoting executive secretary, with only partial control over the Joint Staff. The Eisenhower administration took steps in 1953 and 1958 to further enhance the personal authority of the Chairman over the Joint Staff, and to further expand the size of the Staff. The Chairman was also given a vote within the JCS. This situation would remain relatively unchanged until the passage of the Goldwater-Nichols Act some 3 decades later.

The removal of the Service Secretaries from the National Security Council in 1949 ameliorated, but did not solve, the State Department's "automaton" problem. This is because State's problems could not be fixed by changes in a line and box diagram. Under the Pearl Harbor system, the Foreign Service preserved its independent status within the executive branch, and no

structural barriers were placed between the Secretary of State and the President. But a system designed to serve the concept of national security was simply not conducive to the perpetuation of the State Department's role as the lead agency in U.S. foreign policy decisionmaking. To the extent that State Department representatives like Dean Acheson, George Kennan, and Paul Nitze became articulate spokespersons for the new national security perspective, they bolstered their personal influence within Washington. But they helped to establish a point of view which favored the new national security agencies at the long term expense of the Foreign Service: Why defer to a "born again" national security institution when an entirely new network of institutions had been created to serve this specific purpose? On the other hand, to the extent that the State Department sought to focus its attention on alternative themes, it ran the risk of becoming completely irrelevant.

The State Department was often its own worst enemy in the postwar bureaucratic battles. The most glaring instance was State's failure to grasp the opportunity provided by Truman in 1945 to play a dominant role in the field of intelligence analysis and coordination. At the end of the War, the President had disbanded the OSS and transferred its Research and Analysis branch to the State Department. More importantly, the President designated State to serve as the lead agency in the coordination of all federal agencies involved in the gathering and analysis of intelligence relating to national security. Dean Acheson recounts in his memoirs that his Department "muffed" this opportunity because senior members of the Foreign Service balked at the prospect of integrating OSS personnel into their exclusive community and because they feared that

these new responsibilities would cut into the budgets of the existing State Department desks.<sup>54</sup> In the face of State Department reluctance and active lobbying from other government agencies (FBI, War, and Navy Departments), the President took back his gift and began to develop plans for a new intelligence agency linked to the proposed National Security Council.

For a brief period after the passage of the 1947 NSA, the State Department, with Truman's support, was able to preserve its institutional influence within the Washington policymaking community. The role played by the State Department's Policy Planning Staff in the formulation of NSC 68 is a familiar illustration of this fact. But by the time the Eisenhower administration arrived, the inherent logic of national security was beginning to erode State's power base within the beltway. Historians looking for a specific turning point might take note of the first official meeting between Paul Nitze and Secretary of State John Foster Dulles. Soon after Eisenhower's inauguration, Dulles informed Nitze that he was being removed from his position as head of the Policy Planning Staff. Dulles went on to tell Nitze that since the Policy Planning Staff dealt primarily with national security issues, its activities should be placed under the National Security Council. The Secretary also stated that "he hoped to devote 95 percent of his own time to those issues."<sup>55</sup>

As previously mentioned, Truman was suspicious of the National Security Council even before he signed the National Security Act. To ensure that the NSC remained an advisory rather than a policymaking body, he attended only 12 of 57 meetings prior to the outbreak of the Korean War. During this period, he relied upon the NSC's first executive secretary, Admiral Sidney Souers, to provide him with



summaries of the meetings. Following the North Korean invasion, however, the President concluded that he needed to rely much more heavily upon the NSC, and that whenever possible he should preside over its meetings. It was nonetheless left to Truman's successor to elevate the National Security Council to the "keystone" status that was envisioned by the 1947 legislation. President Eisenhower worked with Robert Cutler (who was given the title of Special Assistant for National Security Affairs) to introduce a clearly articulated and vertically structured decisionmaking system with an expanded NSC staff and an extensive committee network, all under the direct authority of the President. A congressional subcommittee chaired by Senator Henry Jackson would later criticize the Eisenhower administration for its expansion of the NSC and recommend that it be "de-institutionalized."<sup>56</sup> From this point onward, however, the NSC would be accepted by the Washington policy community as an independent and influential corporate entity "at the top of policy hill."<sup>57</sup>

The CIA also underwent significant transformation during the first 13 years of its existence, but not in the direction envisioned by the National Security Act. With 20-20 hindsight the authors of the 1947 legislation seem naïve for believing that the CIA and the DCI would be permitted by the other large and well-networked national security agencies to become the gatekeepers between the White House and the intelligence community. In any event, in a situation in which the CIA was almost immediately blocked in its efforts to fulfill its primary mandate as the coordinator of national intelligence, the Agency found an alternative outlet for its energies and attention in the form of covert activity. The difficult negotiations which culminated in the CIA

taking responsibility for “black operations” turned on the problem of distinguishing between war, peace, and some third international situation. Since both the State Department and the military were concerned about guilt by association with covert activities in a period of undeclared war against the Soviet Union, reliance upon the CIA became the default solution.<sup>58</sup>

The rapid growth of the covert side of the CIA during the formative period of the Cold War tended to divert attention from the fact that the Agency was not performing the coordinative role for which it was created.<sup>59</sup> Control over intelligence, as one of the most fungible forms of bureaucratic power, was simply too important to the established Departments to be given away to the fledgling CIA, even in the name of national security. Five decades later, Jeffrey Richelson was justified in claiming that “the CIA developed in accord with a maximal interpretation” of the 1947 National Security Act as it relates to both its analytical and its covert activities.<sup>60</sup> But there is no basis for making this claim regarding intelligence coordination.

The National Security Resources Board was also severely tested during the formative period of the Cold War. Considered by Eberstadt and Forrestal to be the second most important innovation of the 1947 Act (after the NSC) the NSRB was designed “to advise the President concerning the coordination of military, industrial and civilian mobilization.”<sup>61</sup> To accomplish this task, Arthur Hill, the first Chairman of the NSRB, argued that he needed unfettered access to data from other federal agencies. He suffered the same fate as the Director of Central Intelligence when he pressed this argument. But unlike the CIA, the NSRB had no alternative role to play within the Pearl Harbor system when its initial efforts were blocked. Hill also sought to

bolster both his personal influence over the NSRB board and his agency's direct control over key elements of the domestic economy. But as had been the case after World War I, when Bernard Baruch had failed in his efforts to continue the activities of the powerful War Industries Board after the conflict ended, Hill discovered that neither the American people nor their elected officials were willing to accept comprehensive economic regulation in a period of peace. More importantly, World War II had confirmed for most Americans that even in a situation of national emergency, excessive government interference in the economy stifled competition and innovation. Hill soon returned to the private sector, and the NSRB was dissolved at the start of the Eisenhower administration.

### **Shape and Content.**

The Pearl Harbor system shared many characteristics with British arrangements for civilian-military and interservice cooperation, but it also exhibited some uniquely American elements. It corresponded to Eberstadt's vision of coordinated rather than directive decisionmaking, while preserving both the constitutionally-designated authority of the President as Commander in Chief, Chief Diplomat, and Chief Executive; and the budgetary, oversight, and advice and consent authority of Congress. It seems safe to argue that if this system had been created immediately after Pearl Harbor, it would have been much more centralized. The fact that key participants in the postwar debates (in particular, Eberstadt and Forrestal) were able to make a convincing case for a coordinated decisionmaking system was largely attributable to the high degree of civilian-military and interservice

cooperation which occurred during the war. The critics of centralization could point to the record of SWNCC and the JCS to back up their claims that interagency and interservice cooperation was not only possible but preferable to more vertically structured arrangements. It soon became apparent, however, that civilian and military agencies were significantly less inclined to cooperate in a postwar environment, even in the service of national security.

During the first 13 years of its operation, some of the structural flaws in the Pearl Harbor system were identified and corrected, either by statutory amendments or executive action. The pervasive defect of the 1947 system, a reliance upon voluntary cooperation to resolve serious institutional differences, was especially evident within the National Military Establishment. The result was an unprecedented situation of gridlock and open conflict among the three services. Successive revisions of the National Security Act corrected many of the NME's initial flaws, by enhancing the personal authority of the Secretary of Defense and the Chairman of the JCS, and marginalizing the Service Secretaries.

Between 1947 and 1960, Truman and (to a greater extent) Eisenhower also took steps to insure that the National Security Council did not challenge the constitutional authority of the President. The Korean War played an important role in convincing both Presidents that they needed something like an NSC to assist in the formulation of strategy. But both men made arrangements to closely monitor and manage the National Security Council. It is a measure of their success that, by the time Eisenhower left office, one expert could describe the NSC as "a creature of the president."<sup>62</sup>

The tendency on the part of the framers of the 1947 system to rely upon voluntary cooperation to

overcome institutional differences also created serious problems for the CIA. Established as the lead agency in intelligence coordination, it was never able to convince or compel other key institutional actors to accept it as a gatekeeper between themselves and the President. The CIA was also constrained by strict legal prohibitions against domestic operations. Over time, the Agency was able to compensate for these serious problems by establishing itself as “. . . the chief instrument for carrying the Cold War to the enemy.”<sup>63</sup> But the problems inherent in the CIA’s charter continue to complicate the nation’s ability to collect and analyze intelligence today.

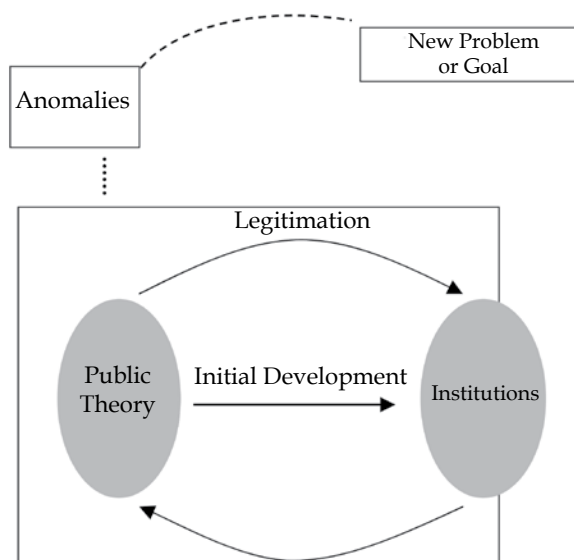
Other elements of the Pearl Harbor system exhibited structural flaws which either overwhelmed them or were at least never resolved. Encouraged by a vaguely worded legislative mandate and growing Cold War tensions, the Director of the National Security Resources Board attempted to acquire comprehensive control over the U.S. economy. This went beyond what the American people, and their elected representatives, were willing to accept, even in the name of preparedness. A national security state was one thing, but a garrison state was an entirely different matter.<sup>64</sup>

## **Conclusion.**

Triggered by crisis, tested in war and tempered by postwar politics and enduring national values, the Pearl Harbor system was designed to serve a public theory of national security which was characterized by a new sense of permanent vulnerability and a commitment to permanent preparedness. The sine qua non of this public theory was that the military had to be

accorded a preeminent position in the shaping of both peacetime and wartime policies. With 20-20 hindsight, we can conclude that the military (broadly defined to include the civilian Secretary of Defense and the Office of the Secretary of Defense) has been the principal beneficiary of the reforms which took place between 1947 and 1960, and the Department of State has been the primary victim.

The Pearl Harbor system came into existence just in time to guide and sustain the Cold War. Ironically, this threat-based system proved to be well suited to a radically changed strategic environment characterized by “Buck Rogers weapons” and a worldwide Soviet threat. The public theory of national security and the institutions created in 1947 sustained and legitimized each other for over 5 decades. Together they created a national security community which was strong enough to cope with numerous Kuhnian “anomalies” (including post-colonial nationalism, nonalignment, and authoritarian versus totalitarian governments) during the Cold War.<sup>65</sup> Figure 2 illustrates the process of mutual reinforcement between the public theory of national security and the institutional elements of the Pearl Harbor system.



**Figure 2. Process of Mutual Reinforcement: Ideas/Institutions.**

### **Operationalization and Codification.**

It was not until America was directly attacked on September 11, 2001 (9/11), that the nation as a whole began to question key premises of this national security community. Since that time, there has been widespread support for architectonic reform of the Pearl Harbor system. This monograph has been guided by a conviction that a useful first step in undertaking such changes is to understand how and why the framers of the National Security Act were able to accomplish comprehensive reform nearly 60 years ago, and how and why they made certain mistakes in the process.

## ENDNOTES - CHAPTER 2

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2. The phrase is borrowed from Robert Jervis, "Realism, Game Theory and Cooperation," *World Politics*, Vol. 40, April 1988, pp. 340-344, quoted by Alexander Wendt in "Anarchy Is What States Make of It: The Social Construction of Power Politics," *International Organization*, Vol. 46, No. 2, Spring 1992, p. 393. See also Wendt's analysis of why "history matters," in "Constructing International Politics," p. 77; and John Mearsheimer's response in "A Realist Reply," p. 92, both in *International Security*, Vol. 20, No. 1, Summer 1995.

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## **CHAPTER 3**

### **THE NATIONAL SECURITY POLICY PROCESS: THE NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL AND INTERAGENCY SYSTEM**

**Alan G. Whittaker  
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How U.S. foreign, defense, and other policies are developed, coordinated, articulated, and implemented is critically important to this nation's well being. Central to the policy development and decisionmaking process is the National Security Council (NSC), which serves as the president's principal forum for considering national security and foreign policy matters. The Council advises and assists the president on national security and foreign policies and also serves as the principal arm for coordinating these policies among various departments.<sup>2</sup>

This monograph describes the national security decisionmaking process. Readers should keep in mind that the processes described reflect, in general, the operation of the national security interagency system. However, at times, individuals and circumstances will produce idiosyncratic ways of doing business.

#### **National Security Council Organization.**

The NSC is chaired by the President and is called into session at the President's discretion. Its statutory members are the President, Vice President, and the Secretaries of State and Defense. The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) is the statutory military



advisor to the Council, and the Director of National Intelligence is the intelligence advisor. The National Security Advisor (NSA) is not a statutory member, but is responsible for determining the agenda in consultation with the other regular attendees of the NSC, ensuring that papers are prepared, recording deliberations, and disseminating Presidential decisions.

In the current Bush administration, others invited to attend formal NSC meetings include the Chief of Staff to the President, Counsel to the President, the Secretary of the Treasury, the Assistant to the President for Economic Policy, and the Assistant to the President for Homeland Security. The Attorney General and Director of the Office of Management and Budget are invited to attend meetings that address issues pertaining to their responsibilities. Heads of other executive departments and agencies, as well as other senior officials, may be invited.

The NSA is the President's personal advisor responsible for the daily management of national security affairs for the President. The President alone decides national security policy, but the NSA is responsible for ensuring that the President has all the necessary information, that a full range of policy options have been identified, that the prospects and risks of each option have been identified, that legal considerations have been addressed, that difficulties in implementation have been identified, and that all NSC principals have been included in the development process. The NSA, appointed by the President as a personal aide, is not subject to Congressional confirmation. Thus, any attempt at oversight of the NSC and its staff by Congress must be conducted through meetings with the President or other principals of the NSC.

The professionals who work directly for the NSA constitute the NSC staff. Staff members handling substantive issues include political appointees, frequently experts from think tanks and academia, senior professionals on detail from executive branch departments, and military officers. The expertise of career Foreign Service Officers in foreign affairs often means that the senior positions of the NSC regional directorates are assigned to State Department personnel.

This staff conducts the day-to-day management of national security affairs for the White House and numbered approximately 225 in 2007, with around 110 policy positions. However, the NSC also can rely on a network of former NSC staffers and other trusted policy experts, if needed, when reviewing policy issues. Because the statutory NSC historically has met infrequently and has had little direct contact with the staff level components of the executive branch as a body, the NSC staff is commonly referred to (incorrectly) as “the NSC.” Thus, when people in the executive branch agencies or legislative branch talk about calling or working with the NSC, they nearly always are referring to the NSC staff.

Formal meetings of the NSC tended to be rare. Presidents were inclined to manage national security affairs through direct meetings with cabinet officers and key advisors, and through a series of committees with defined responsibilities. This pattern of infrequent NSC meetings changed with the advent of the September 11, 2001 (9/11) terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon, and the subsequent military operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. Like President Harry Truman during the Korean War, President George W. Bush found it valuable to bring together his most senior policymakers on a

regular basis to formulate policies for conducting the global war on terrorism, military campaigns in Afghanistan and Iraq, and the reorganization of agencies and activities to ensure the security of the U.S. homeland. In the immediate aftermath of 9/11 and during the height of U.S. military operations in Afghanistan and Iraq, the Bush NSC met on a daily basis. In the intervening periods and subsequently, it has met at least weekly at the White House or through the use of the Secure Video-Teleconference Service (or SVTS called “civits”) when the President traveled or spent time at his ranch in Texas.

The most senior, regularly constituted interagency group is the Principals Committee (PC). The six principal Presidential advisors responsible for dealing with national security are the Secretaries of State, Defense, and Treasury, the National Security Advisor, Director of National Intelligence, and CJCS. In different administrations, these individuals, along with the President’s Chief of Staff and the Vice President, have met on a regular basis to discuss current and developing issues, review and coordinate policy recommendations developed by subordinate interagency groups and affected departments and agencies, and give direction for implementation or follow-up analyses. Especially during the current administration, the Vice President has played a major role in the PC policy process.

Other key executive branch officials may be called to attend Principals Committee meetings when matters relating to their areas of responsibility are discussed. These invitees include the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency (DCIA, particularly when covert operations are being considered), the Attorney General, the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, and the Assistant to the President for Homeland

Security Affairs. When international economic issues are on the agenda, attendees may include the Secretary of Commerce, the U.S. Trade Representative, the Assistant to the President for Economic Policy, and the Secretary of Agriculture. The Bush administration also has included the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security, the White House Chief of Staff, the Deputy National Security Advisor, and National Security Advisor to the Vice President in PC meetings when appropriate.

Subordinate to the Principals Committee is the Deputies Committee (DC). As the senior sub-Cabinet interagency forum, the DC is responsible for directing the work of interagency working groups and ensuring that issues brought before the PC or the NSC have been properly analyzed and prepared for high-level deliberation. The DC is where the bulk of the government's policy decisions are made in preparation for the PC's review and the President's decision. Issues decided above the DC level either are very significant national security decisions, are very contentious, or both. In some circumstances (e.g., crisis situations), a significant portion of interagency policy development and coordination may be done at the DC level rather than at lower levels. Moreover, the global war on terrorism and military operations in Afghanistan and Iraq significantly affected the policy decision responsibilities of both the PC and DC.

The DC is composed of the deputy or relevant under secretary to the cabinet secretaries. The regular DC members include the Deputy Secretary of State or Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, Under Secretary of the Treasury or Under Secretary of the Treasury for International Affairs, Deputy Secretary of Defense or Under Secretary of Defense for Policy,

Deputy Attorney General, Deputy Director of the Office of Management and Budget, Deputy Director of National Intelligence (or the Director of the National Counterterrorism Center if counterterrorism issues are being considered), Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (Vice CJCS), Deputy Chief of Staff to the President for Policy, Chief of Staff and National Security Advisor to the Vice President, Deputy Assistant to the President for Homeland Security Affairs, Deputy Assistant to the President for International Economics, and the Deputy National Security Advisor (who serves as its chair except when the Deputy Assistant to the President for International Economics chairs meetings dealing with international economic issues). When international economic issues are on the agenda, the DC's regular membership adds the Deputy Secretary of Commerce, a Deputy United States Trade Representative, and the Deputy Secretary of Agriculture.

Subordinate to the DC are a variety of interagency working groups called Policy Coordination Committees (PCCs).<sup>3</sup> These interagency committees are composed of substantive experts and senior officials from the departments and agencies represented on the DC. Although bounded by how much control is exerted over policy issues by the PC and DC groups, PCCs historically were the main forum for interagency coordination. In the post-9/11 policy environment with more issues being worked at the PC and DC level, PCCs have had more coordination and implementation duties than policy development responsibilities.

Contingent upon the scope of their responsibilities, some PCCs may meet regularly (weekly or even daily in a crisis situation) while others meet only when developments or planning require policy synchronization. They are responsible for managing

the development and implementation of national security policies when they involve more than one government agency. PCCs provide policy analysis for consideration by the more senior committees of the NSC system and ensure timely responses to decisions made by the President. The role of each PCC in policy development and implementation has tended to vary according to the amount of authority and responsibility delegated to them by the DC and PC. They are organized around either regional or functional issues. Regional PCCs normally are headed by Assistant Secretaries of State while functional PCCs are headed by senior department officials or NSC Senior Directors.

Regional PCCs include:

- Europe and Eurasia
- Western Hemisphere
- East Asia
- South Asia
- Near East and North Africa
- Africa (State and NSC co-chair).

Functional PCCs in 2007 included (the department responsible for chairing the committee is in parentheses):

- Arms Control (NSC)
- Biodefense (NSC and Homeland Security Council [HSC])
- Combating Terrorism Information Strategy (NSC)
- Contingency Planning (NSC: Pol-Mil and Crisis planning)
- Counter-Terrorism Security Group (NSC)
- Defense Strategy, Force Structure, and Planning (Department of Defense [DoD])
- Democracy, Human Rights, and International

- Operations (NSC)
- Detainees (NSC)
- Global Environment (NSC and National Economic Council [NEC] co-chair)
- HIV-AIDS and Infectious Diseases (State and Health and Human Services [HHS])
- Information Sharing
- Intelligence and Counterintelligence (NSC)
- Interdiction (NSC)
- International Development and Humanitarian Assistance (State)
- International Drug Control Policy (NSC and Office of National Drug Control Policy)
- International Finance (Treasury)
- International Organized Crime (NSC)
- Maritime Security (NSC and HSC)
- Muslim World Outreach (NSC and State co-chair)
- Proliferation Strategy, Counterproliferation, and Homeland Defense (NSC)
- Reconstruction and Stabilization Operations (State)
- Records Access and Information Security (NSC)
- Space (NSC)
- Strategic Communication (NSC and State: international public diplomacy)
- Terrorist Finance (Treasury)
- Transnational Economic Issues (NEC).

Although PCCs are divided into regional or functional groups, participation is not limited to people with only regional or functional expertise. Regional PCCs may contain department or agency members with functional expertise, and functional PCCs are

likely to include regional experts. For example, the non-proliferation PCC may include regional experts covering countries involved with proliferation issues, and the Counter-Terrorism Security Group (which meets weekly) includes representatives from the Department of Homeland Security.

In addition to PCC working groups, the Bush administration has found it necessary to stand up two special interagency groups to coordinate the activities of the large commitments of U.S. military, reconstruction, and diplomatic contingents in Afghanistan and Iraq. Neither group is a traditional PCC because both have assigned staffs to handle day-to-day operations, but both report to the DC. The Afghanistan Interagency Operations Group (AIOG, chaired by the State Department's Coordinator for Afghanistan) coordinates interagency, evaluates progress and whether benchmarks have been achieved, and notifies the DC when problems arise with respect to Afghanistan.

Likewise, the Iraq Policy and Operations Group (IPOG) coordinates the multifaceted involvement of U.S. Government and private sector agencies in Iraq. Established after the Iraq interim government assumed sovereignty over the country's affairs, the IPOG is chaired by a Deputy Assistant Secretary of State and a Senior NSC Director for Defense Policy, and reports directly to the DC. The IPOG conducts daily video teleconferences on such issues as infrastructure reconstruction, security, and elections planning in Iraq.

The AIOG and IPOG represent sub-PCC working groups that often are established to allow the interagency to scrutinize and brainstorm about developing policy. Such groups may be short-lived as the policy issues recede in importance or appear not to



warrant a major interagency effort, or eventually evolve into full blown, formal interagency PCCs. For example, during 2006-07, PCCs have been established with regard to Information Sharing and for Reconstruction and Stabilization as result of the need for greater interagency collaboration and coordination. The President makes the decision as to whether or not a working group becomes designated as a formal PCC.

As mentioned earlier, another major White House entity associated with national security is the NEC, first established in 1993 by President Bill Clinton. It advises the President on matters related to global economic policy. By Executive Order, the NEC has four principal functions: to coordinate policymaking for domestic and international economic issues; to coordinate economic policy advice for the President; to ensure that policy decisions and programs are consistent with the President's economic goals; and to monitor implementation of the President's economic policy agenda. In many foreign policy areas economic issues have become equally or more important than traditional military issues—as in the case of China. Also increasingly, international and domestic policy issues and their implications for the well-being of the United States are seen to overlap. As a result, there is increased coordination and integration between the NSC and NEC staffs.

Soon after 9/11, another interagency body responsible for coordinating policies related to homeland security was established by the Bush administration. The Homeland Security Council (HSC) was established on October 8, 2001, and its Principals Committee was organized as the senior interagency forum for homeland security issues.

## **NSC Policy Process.**

The NSC is the President's principal forum for considering national security and foreign policy matters with his senior national security advisors and cabinet officials. The National Security Act of 1947<sup>4</sup> directs that the function of the NSC "shall be to advise the President with respect to the integration of domestic, foreign, and military policies related to the national security so as to enable the military services and the other departments and agencies of the government to cooperate more effectively in matters involving the national security," as well as to perform "other functions the President may direct for the purpose of more effectively coordinating the policies and functions of the departments and agencies of the government relating to the national security." The NSC has the responsibility to "assess and appraise the objectives, commitments, and risks of the United States" and to "consider policies on matters of common interest to the departments and agencies of the Government concerned with the national security."

When the president makes a policy decision, he usually transmits the information verbally to the relevant cabinet secretaries, the NSA, or other appropriate officials. Occasionally, he will wish to ensure that there is clear understanding of policy objectives and requirements and will issue a formal decision document stating the policy in order to communicate the specifics of the decision to affected government departments and agencies or to the general public. The current Bush administration calls these formal policy decisions National Security Presidential Directives. (See Appendix A for the titles used in previous administrations.)

The roles of the parts of the NSC system also are influenced by historical events and developments. For example, during the Clinton administration, the NSC increasingly focused on the relationship of economic matters and international trade to overall national security. Historically, economic issues were handled by the NSC staff and supported by the President's Council of Economic Advisors. The increasing complexity of macro-economic issues, however, and the extent to which national interests progressively involved economic policy, led to the creation of the NEC and the appointment of an Assistant to the President for Economic Policy. The Bush administration continues to recognize the increasing importance of economic matters to national security affairs by appointing (or "embedding") economic specialists to most of the NSC directorates. Likewise, the attacks of 9/11 led to the establishment of the Homeland Security Council and the Department of Homeland Security.

Historical events also affect the composition of the designated directorates within the NSC staff—causing them to vary from one administration to the next and sometimes change during an administration. For example, until 1997, the Clinton administration had a separate NSC directorate for "Gulf War Illness Affairs," which dealt with questions of Iraq's possession and possible use of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) against the United States during the Gulf War of 1991-92. As policy concerns shifted to other areas, this office was disbanded and its remaining policy issues merged with the Defense Policy and Arms Control Directorate. When the current Bush administration came into office, NSC Directorates responsible for Russian policy and for Southeast European policy (i.e., the Balkans) merged with the European Affairs Directorate into

a single European and Eurasian Affairs Directorate, reflecting the administration's desire to deal with Russia and Central and Southern Europe within the larger context of interrelated European affairs. Also following the 9/11 attacks, the NSC established the Office for Combating Terrorism (under a new Deputy Assistant to the President/Deputy National Security Advisor for Combating Terrorism), and other NSC directorates and PCCs are devoting more time to terrorist considerations and developments that may affect homeland security. This office continues in the current NSC as a Directorate headed by a Deputy Assistant to the President/Deputy National Security Advisor.

The organization of the NSC staff underwent further reorganization at the beginning of the second term of the administration of George W. Bush when Stephen Hadley replaced Condoleezza Rice as National Security Advisor. Hadley established a Deputy National Security Advisor for Iraq and Afghanistan, and Deputy Assistants to the President/Deputy National Security Advisors (DAP/DNSA) for Strategic Communication and Global Outreach, and Global Democracy Strategy in addition to the continuing positions of DAP/DNSAs for International Economics, and Combating Terrorism. These reflected the increased emphasis on Iraq and Afghanistan; promoting freedom, democracy, and human rights in the world; and communicating U.S. values and priorities effectively to the American people as well as to other countries.

The increased emphasis on the policy areas noted above is also reflected in the establishment of an NSC Directorate for Near East and North Africa Affairs under the Directorate for Global Democracy Strategy in addition to the regional directorates covering those areas. The reorganization also reestablished a

separate NSC regional Directorate for Russia, reflecting the importance of relations with Russia on a wide range of bilateral and multilateral issues. Also noteworthy is the formation of a Directorate for Relief, Stabilization, and Development under the DAP for International Economics, which signals the increased importance of these areas.

### **The National Security Advisor and the Policy Process.<sup>5</sup>**

Presidents rely heavily upon their NSA to undertake a number of specific roles. This person must enjoy the President's full trust and confidence. The 1987 report by the Tower Commission on the operation of the NSC staff identified a number of specific roles for NSA's that have evolved and proven beneficial to the President in effectively managing national security affairs.<sup>6</sup>

- He is an "honest broker" for the NSC process. He assures that issues are clearly presented to the President; that all reasonable options, together with an analysis of their disadvantages and risks, are brought to his attention; and that the views of the President's other principal advisors are accurately conveyed.
- He provides advice from the President's vantage point, unalloyed by institutional responsibilities and biases. Unlike the Secretaries of State or Defense, who have substantial organizations for which they are responsible, the President is the NSA's only constituency.
- He monitors the actions taken by the executive departments in implementing the President's national security policies. He determines whether

these actions are consistent with Presidential decisions and whether, over time, the underlying policies continue to serve U.S. interests.

- He assumes a special role in crisis management. The rapid pace of developments during crises often draws the National Security Advisor into an even more active role of advising the President. He fulfills the need for prompt and coordinated action under Presidential control (often with secrecy being essential) and in communicating Presidential needs and directives to the departments and agencies of the Executive Branch.
- He reaches out for new ideas and initiatives that will give substance to broad Presidential objectives for national security.
- He keeps the President informed about international events and developments in the Congress and the Executive Branch that affect the President's policies and priorities.

The emphasis placed upon these various roles as described in the Tower Commission report varies from administration to administration according to the President's preferences, the NSA's interpretation of his or her role, and the personalities and styles of the various members of the Principals Committee and other policymaking bodies. For example, during the tenure of Condoleezza Rice as NSA, she focused more on advising the President and ensuring coordination of policy between departments, and less on initiating policy at the NSC and directly monitoring the implementation of policy in executive branch departments. The intense involvement of the Departments of Defense and State in the global war on terrorism and missions in Afghanistan

and Iraq resulted in Secretaries Donald Rumsfeld and Colin Powell being more frequently involved directly in policy development and coordination with the President and Vice President rather than through the NSA.

Under Stephen Hadley, the NSC emphasizes brokering policy decisions and developing consensus between executive branch agencies. Moreover, Hadley is seeking to more effectively organize the administrative processes of the NSC as a result of technology advances threatening to overwhelm the staff with e-mails, heightened overseas involvement of U.S. military and diplomatic assets, increased classified and open-source intelligence information, and instantaneous communication with U.S. ambassadors, commanders, and other officials throughout the world. Hadley is instituting mechanisms to triage information coming into the NSC staff and better organize the kinds of policy documents being prepared for the various policy committees and the President.

In general, the NSA's primary roles are to advise the President, advance the President's national security agenda, and oversee the effective operation of the interagency system. The NSA must be able to manage the process of integrating information and policy considerations affecting national interests across the spectrum of government agencies and instruments of power, prioritizing their strategic importance, and synthesizing them into options for the President's consideration. The NSA should bring to the President only those issues vetted through the interagency system so that he can benefit from the counsel of those departments with concomitant responsibilities and authorities. The NSA also must ensure that, given demands upon the President's time from such a wide

variety of policy issues and political constituencies, the President only has to deal with those problems that require his level of involvement. This is a delicate management problem seeking to not usurp the President's authority on "lower level" issues, while, at the same time, not consuming his limited time on issues that others have been delegated the authority to decide. Protecting the President's time involves not only concisely and effectively presenting issues to him, but also managing the constant demands of visiting dignitaries and modern telecommunications that allow foreign governments the capability to communicate directly with the White House. Increasingly, the ability for government leaders to converse directly means the NSA must manage the President's direct communications and act as a gatekeeper for the President to determine who warrants access to directly discuss national security matters.

On occasion, protecting the President's time requires the NSA to meet with foreign officials to deliver or receive messages, or discuss U.S. policy (as when NSA Hadley has met with British Prime Minister Tony Blair in London or Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki in Baghdad). The Tower Commission strongly cautioned that neither the NSA nor the NSC staff should be engaged in operations, or the implementation of policy, as happened during the Iran-Contra affair. Nevertheless, although the Department of State clearly has the responsibility for dealing with foreign officials and implementing foreign policy, the NSA may act as the President's emissary to the extent that the President wishes to use the NSA in this manner — although this role has been utilized sparingly in recent administrations.



The NSA also has responsibilities that affect the President's domestic political standing. This involves the NSA's dealings with Congress and the media. The NSA must work alongside other executive branch officials to build trust with Congress in order to facilitate cooperation between them. Moreover, the NSA must avoid, if possible, any appearance of national security decisions being driven by domestic politics (e.g., emphasizing international crises to divert attention from a domestic political problem), both because national security affairs should be dealt with on their own merits, and because of the need to build bi-partisan consensus on foreign policy. As such, one additional responsibility of the NSA is insulating the NSC staff from any political pressure—either from other components of the White House staff responsible for domestic political affairs or from political interests outside the White House. This can be a difficult mission because national security priorities often are influenced by domestic politics. Consequently, the NSA must focus on advising the President about broader national security problems while being mindful of domestic political factors that may influence the acceptability of policy options.

The NSA's dealings with the media are complicated because while the Secretary of State is primarily responsible for the overall management and explanation of foreign policy, the NSA often acts as an "explicator" of policy to the media. The NSA must balance secrecy requirements with the public's right to know, and the unrelenting pressure from the media for information on a daily basis. Secrets are difficult to maintain in a democracy with a massive bureaucracy and a free press. According to former NSC staffers, news reporting and analysis generally lags policy decisions

by 3-4 days and is about 60-80 percent accurate, depending upon the news operation and its familiarity with the issues being covered.

Thus, to be effective, the NSA must have the trust of the president, the principals of the departments and agencies involved in national security matters, substantive experts in the bureaucracy, numerous foreign leaders and their ministries, members of both parties in Congress, and the news media. He (or she) must be able to manage this series of complex interrelationships and promote cooperation rather than competition among the various stakeholders. In an increasingly complex, multidimensional policy world still possessing strategic threats, the NSA must effectively administer advice and access to the president to enable him to effectively do his job.

### **The NSC Staff and the Policy Process.**

Like the NSA, the roles undertaken by the NSC staff have evolved. Variations from one administration to another are due largely to presidential preferences, organizational and management preferences of the NSA, and changes brought about through the necessity of responding to crises or complex national security problems. A close working relationship between the president and his cabinet secretaries may result in those departments dominating the development and implementation of national security policy. Alternatively, greater dependence by the president on the NSA and interagency rivalries sometimes can lead to a more active role in initiating and guiding policy for the NSC staff. Historical events also can limit or expand the roles taken on by the NSC. For example, the establishment of the NEC in 1993

resulted from the increasing importance and complexity of economics in national security following the collapse of the Soviet Union and the growth of fledgling market economies in former communist countries. Likewise, 9/11 increased the involvement of the NSC staff in counterterrorism policymaking for both domestic and international venues, and the political and military complexities of U.S. actions in Afghanistan and Iraq have emphasized the roles of DoD and the State Department in policy development and implementation. During the first term of the Bush administration, the NSC staff established a new Directorate for Strategic Planning and Southwest Asia Affairs designed to conduct strategic planning and coordination across the NSC as well as handle Southwest Asia.

NSA Hadley has sought to keep the NSC staff focused at a strategic policy level, dealing with the long term implications of foreign developments, national security-related events and circumstances, and intelligence gathering and analysis. Hadley does not want the NSC staff taking a leading role in the implementation of presidential policies, but he does want the directors to ensure that there is successful coordination and implementation, or “follow-through,” of policy decisions made by the PC or DC. For this reason, Hadley established a Senior Advisor for Policy Implementation and Execution in 2005 to take responsibility for strategically tracking policy implementation. Hadley has sought to institute procedures through NSC directors to ensure that policies are implemented and monitored in a coordinated fashion, feedback is obtained on the outcomes of the policy, and that mechanisms are in place to reassess policies if monitoring determines that acceptable results are not achieved. In particular, Hadley has sought to

define measures of success with regard to outcomes as well as specific timeline milestones. Also, Hadley has sought to establish procedures to establish and monitor proper funding processes for policy decisions by establishing a closer relationship with the Office of Management and Budget.

Some of the responsibilities of the NSC staff that have evolved include:<sup>7</sup>

- Direct support to the President in crisis management.
- Liaison with foreign governments.
- Support for negotiations in Presidential summits.<sup>8</sup>
- Articulation of the President's policies to other departments and, at times, to the U.S. public (through the NSA).
- Coordination of summit meetings and overseas travel by the President.
- Support to the President during telephone conversations with foreign leaders.
- Coordination of the interagency policy process and policy implementation follow-up.

The wide-ranging duties and activities of the NSC staff result from the fact that the NSA and the NSC staff work directly for the President. Although the Secretaries of State and Defense are cabinet level officials who belong to the formal National Security Council, they have no authority over the NSC staff. To the extent that the NSA and his/her staff take on functions seen as the prerogative of departments or agencies, tensions and turf battles can develop that may affect the ability of an administration to develop and coordinate policy.

For example, President Richard Nixon's desire to control U.S. foreign policy led him to support NSA Henry Kissinger's efforts to direct a number of foreign policy issues, including normalizing bilateral relations with the People's Republic of China, conducting the war in Vietnam and eventually chairing the peace talks with North Vietnam in Paris. This led to a dominant role by the NSC staff in the development and implementation of policy in a number of areas while supporting the NSA. During the Nixon and Gerald Ford administrations (1973-75), Kissinger served concurrently as the NSA and Secretary of State. This arrangement most likely will never occur again, in part, because this arrangement defeats the objective of having the NSA act as an honest broker of policy among the various executive branch agencies involved in national security affairs.

Although the Secretary of State, by law, is responsible for developing and implementing foreign policy, the President ultimately decides who among his national security team has what responsibilities. Presidents who do not wish to be involved in the details and implementation of foreign policy delegate that authority to the Secretary of State. On the other hand, Presidents who wish to be intimately involved usually rely heavily upon the NSA to help formulate foreign policy and keep them updated on developments. A President's willingness to delegate authority for managing specific issues to his NSA also occasionally results in the NSC staff assuming responsibility both for policy planning and execution. This situation developed during the Reagan administration, resulting in the aberrant Iran-Contra affair.

## **Principals and Deputies Committees and the Policy Process.**

The Principals Committee (PC) acts as the President's senior level policy review and coordination group. In effect, the PC is the same as the NSC without the President and Vice President (although Vice President Richard Cheney regularly participates in PC meetings in the current Bush administration). The PC's mission is to ensure that, as much as possible, policy decisions brought to the President reflect a consensus within the departments.

If the process works as intended, the President does not have to spend time on uncoordinated policy recommendations and can focus on high level problems and those issues upon which the departments could not reach a consensus. In administrations where there are strong rivalries among senior advisors (such as the Kissinger-Secretary of State William Pierce Rogers enmity during the Nixon administration, or the competition between NSA Zbigniew Brzezinski and Secretary of State Cyrus Vance during the Jimmy Carter administration), policy coordination frequently breaks down. Even when strong disagreements (or rivalries) occur between senior policy advisors, such as the Secretaries of State and Defense (e.g., George P. Shultz and Caspar Weinberger during the Ronald Reagan administration, and Powell and Rumsfeld during the first term of George W. Bush), regularly scheduled PC meetings allow for such differences to be aired and identified, and consensus policy recommendations coordinated.

The frequency of PC meetings is driven primarily by the pace of events. It often meets once or twice each week to review policy on pressing matters, but

may meet less or more frequently depending upon circumstances such as crisis situations or just prior to major summit meetings. Currently, when the PC in the Bush administration meets four times a week, it conducts two 45-minute back-to-back meetings on Tuesday afternoons, and a second series of two 45-minute back-to-back meetings on Thursday mornings. Each 45-minute meeting usually covers one major policy topic. In addition to (or sometimes in lieu of) formal PC meetings, weekly informal meetings involving the Secretaries of State and Defense and NSA often are held over breakfast or lunch, or via conference calls or secure video teleconferences. Approximately 50 percent of the PC meetings are conducted using the SVTS. During 2006-07, meetings topics frequently included discussions of the overall strategies for Iraq, Afghanistan, the global war on terrorism, and dealing with North Korea, Iran, and Sudan. Other issues that are time sensitive and involve critical U.S. interests (such as the security situation in Baghdad and the plot to hijack airliners originating in England during the summer of 2006) also are likely to be discussed at the PC level. In general, as the George W. Bush administration progresses through its second term, there has been more involvement at the PC level on updating policies and honing and ensuring the successful implementation, or "follow-through," of existing policies rather than developing many new initiatives.

Likewise, the Deputies Committee (DC) meets when necessary, often four or five times a week, to review PCC recommendations, deliberate issues upon which the PCCs could not reach a consensus, and decide what matters should be forwarded to the PC. Like the PC, many of the DC meetings are conducted via SVTS. Issues worked during the last

year in the Bush administration at the DC level parallel those worked at the PC level. Like the PC during the last year of the administration's first term, the DC has been more involved with refining and ensuring the successful implementation of existing policies rather than developing many new initiatives.

Issues forwarded to the PC include policy recommendations made at the DC and PCC level, and policy issues upon which an interagency consensus could not be reached at the PCC and DC levels (although sometimes President Bush prefers the PC to see an array of analyses and options rather than a single, consensus position). In general, the DC seeks to review issue papers and policy options and recommendations provided by PCC level groups and pass them up to the PC during the following week.

During crises, the PC, DC, and PCCs meet frequently. For example, during the 1991 Gulf War, 1999 Kosovo crisis, the aftermath of the terrorist attacks in September 2001, and the conduct of military operations in Afghanistan and Iraq, a typical day often included:

- Departmental meetings with Secretaries or Deputy Secretaries in the early morning to review developments, responsibilities, taskings, and policy matters related to each department.
- In mid-morning, the DC meets, sometimes conducted via secure teleconferencing with senior staff and area/functional experts, to develop interagency positions on developments and new policy issues. This DC meeting might be followed immediately by a meeting of the DC senior members (without supporting staff) to discuss sensitive intelligence or policy issues.



- In late morning or early afternoon, the PC meets to discuss the results and unresolved issues of the DC, consider strategic policy directions, and determine what issues need to be brought to the attention of the President. PC members may then meet with the President (who usually receives updates on the crisis situation from the NSA throughout the day).
- In mid or late afternoon, the DC again meets to discuss the implementation of decisions reached by the PC and President, and discuss the results of PCC meetings that have been held throughout the day. (Individual PCCs may meet more than once a day during crisis periods.)
- Individual members of the DC are likely to have a late afternoon meeting with their principal to confer about developments of the day, and a subsequent meeting with their staffs to discuss the day's decisions, developments, and next steps. Depending upon the circumstances of the day, the PC may have an additional evening meeting and subsequent consultation with the President.

This kind of high operational tempo may persist for several weeks or months, depending upon the duration of the crisis and the need to involve the President and cabinet level officers on a daily basis.

9/11 and the subsequent missions of Operation ENDURING FREEDOM (Afghanistan) and Operation IRAQI FREEDOM produced a policy decision tempo that resulted in unusually frequent (from an historical standpoint) NSC and PC meetings. Due to the simultaneity of the missions in Afghanistan and Iraq,

the evolving policies and operations related to the global war on terrorism (and domestic policy concerns related to the establishment of the Department of Homeland Security and potential domestic terrorist threats), the NSC and PC found themselves meeting on a regular, often daily, basis during the first term of President George W. Bush. The swiftness with which potential threats and circumstances could change, and the complex, multiple, and often overlapping or conflicting policy and operational issues, required regular review of mission outcomes and their implications for maintaining or altering policy decisions. The rapid pace of developments combined with the extensive senior government experience of the PC (Vice President Cheney as a former Secretary of Defense, Secretary Powell as a former NSA and CJCS, and Secretary Rumsfeld as a previous Secretary of Defense) meant that many policy problems were identified, assessed, and decided at the NSC or PC level rather than being delegated to the DC or PCCs to be staffed. Furthermore, the evolution of events in the field meant that PC decisions coordinated one day might be modified in a discussion by a principal the next day with President Bush or in a departmental meeting because of some new development. As such, members of the Deputies Committee often had to work hard to keep abreast of evolving decisions from the PC level, and strived to implement well-coordinated policies across departments and agencies.

### **Policy Coordination Committees and the Policy Process.**

Policy Coordination Committees deal with a range of national security matters that cut across the

responsibilities of executive branch departments and agencies. Issues may be regional, such as U.S. policy toward Iraq or NATO expansion, or functional, such as arms control agreements with Russia or terrorism in South Asia. PCC work is different than that performed in the departments or agencies. Departmental or agency planning focuses on achieving agency objectives on a regional and operational level. Coordination is focused on departmental ways and means and is based upon internal agency doctrine and processes.

Contentious issues are resolved internally at senior levels. PCC planning is focused more on advance planning at the political and strategic level. PCCs do the “heavy lifting” in analyzing policy issues and developing policy options and recommendations that provide policymakers with flexibility and a range of options that are politically acceptable and minimize the risk of failure. Interagency groups also must develop policy options that advance U.S. interests through coordinated actions often involving many departments and agencies. An effective interagency process reduces the complexity of the policy decisions and focuses the planning on how to make the mission succeed. Accordingly, policy planning must integrate desired policy aims and synchronize the efforts of the different departments and agencies.

Collaboration is central for success, but teamwork and unity is vulnerable to political risks, bureaucratic equities, and personal relationships. Because U.S. interests and foreign policy have tended to remain fairly stable from administration to administration, an informal policy consensus often exists across agencies when dealing with routine matters. But, policy disagreements and turf battles are inevitable because of divergent political philosophies,

different departmental objectives and priorities, disagreements about the dynamics or implications of developing situations, or because departments are seeking to evolve or formulate new roles and missions. Also, hard problems do not lend themselves to easy solutions, and frequently there are genuine differences between departments over the best ways and objectives for dealing with a national security problem. Moreover, because regional experts tend to dominate on overall policy approaches (even though they may lack expertise on many functional issues), different interpretations of events or credibility issues may arise within the PCC group. These issues must be openly addressed to enable the group to collaborate effectively, refine core policy issues, and achieve a consensus policy document. As one former NSC staff member observed, the easiest outcome to produce in the interagency process is to *prevent* policy from being made.

The operational dynamics of individual PCCs vary according to the personalities (and, sometimes, personal agenda) of the individuals who are in charge of, or participate in, them. In general, however, most PCCs undertake a five-part process when working on a policy issue:

1. Define the problem: This includes assessing what U.S. national interests and strategic objectives are involved, reviewing intelligence reports, and seeking to determine some understanding of the dynamics of the situation (including what is known, what is assumed, and what is unknown) and the interests and motivations of the actors involved. Is there a consensus on the issues at stake for the United States and the implications of acting or not acting? This part of the process also includes identifying additional information and

intelligence needs and levying requirements to the intelligence and diplomatic communities.

2. Clarify PCC processes and intragroup “rules of engagement”: Develop broad principles to guide the way the interagency group should think about a problem and craft a strategy for addressing it.

3. Articulate policy objectives, assess options, and develop an overall strategy for implementing U.S. policy: Deliberations may include preventive strategies, or strategies for responses to possible developments as policies are implemented. Mission areas for the departments and agencies should be clarified and component strategies (including identifying capabilities and resource needs) developed that, eventually, are integrated into a single strategic approach. “Strawman” proposals are useful for clarifying departmental perspectives. Strategies usually are required for consulting with friends and allies, and developing multilateral consensus on strategic objectives and operational activities. Other considerations include monitoring the implementation of complex, multidimensional activities (which may include the activities of several departments), and anticipating transition dynamics as policies begin to produce expected and unanticipated effects.

4. Identify policy instruments and component strategies (including ways and means) to achieve the desired policy objectives: Operational planning must be clarified and coordinated among the agencies involved, and integrated missions must be identified and coordinated where appropriate. A process must be developed that steers around interagency and bureaucratic roadblocks. The standard operating procedures in departments and agencies may have difficulty working with coordinated interagency plans

and gaps may develop in implementation. PCCs must seek ways to talk with operational-level staff to determine potential problems and solicit suggestions for effective implementation.

5. Draft an integrated policy document: Ideally, this document should confirm the strategic approach, objectives, scope of effort and timelines, requirements and preparatory actions, chains of command, communication, and responsibilities (independent and shared) and accountability for the departments. It also should identify assets, resource, and logistical requirements. Mechanisms should be established for integration at all levels as policies are implemented. Key judgments about the situation, the important policy issues, and recommendations should be identified for the Deputies and Principals Committees. The Deputies and Principals need enough detail (but not too much) to be able to understand the dynamics of the situation, the major issues at stake, and implications for our national security. Depending upon the preferences of the incumbent administration, the PCC may be tasked to recommend a single policy option or multiple options, and provide majority and dissenting positions.

Although regional or functional PCCs deal with issues unique to their area of responsibility, there are a number of issues that most, if not all, PCCs find useful to consider. These include assessments of:

- Whether there is a compelling necessity for action. Are there threats to vital (or critical or important) U.S. interests? Is there an imperative for the United States to act? Are there viable alternatives to U.S. action?

- Desired U.S. objectives and the level of commitment to those objectives (by the departments and agencies, Congress, and U.S. public). Are the objectives clear and directly linked to U.S. interests?
- The level of U.S. resolve in its policy commitments as perceived by the countries the policies are targeted toward, as well as other states in the region, allied, friendly, neutral and hostile states. The PCCs also should consider how the U.S. Congress and the U.S. public are likely to perceive the administration's resolve on proposed policies.
- The capabilities and willingness of allies, friends, and neutrals to support U.S. policy objectives and initiatives. Is there a consensus by key states or actors on the issue? What are their national interests? To what extent will they benefit or experience costs for supporting U.S. policy? What resources (political or otherwise) will they be willing to commit in support of the policy objectives; are they willing to act in a combined or coordinated manner?
- The likely reaction of regional states, allies, friends, neutrals, or hostile states that might oppose U.S. objectives. What are their calculations of costs and risks versus benefits to opposing the United States?
- The likely reaction of the United Nations or other international organizations to U.S. objectives. What are their calculations of costs versus benefits to supporting or opposing the United States?
- Costs and risks in implementing the policy versus costs and risks of inaction.

- Supporting or opposing legal authorities (e.g., international law, U.N. resolutions).
- The effects of stalled policy initiatives, and the administration's willingness to escalate (e.g., incentives, influence, coercion, etc.) to achieve policy objectives.
- Receptivity to considerations of alternative policies, and strategies for achieving the policy objectives in the face of stalled initiatives.
- The inherent limitations in trying to influence the course of events in achieving policy objectives.
- The effects of policy actions over time, including unintended consequences.
- Expected costs and benefits for those departments and agencies involved.

Some policy issues are even more complex and involve multidimensional assessments of allies and friends, neutrals, international organizations, and affected populations. For example, policy planning for peace operations, stabilization and reconstruction, or humanitarian missions would include consideration of issues related to:

- Diplomatic collaboration to solicit participants and build coalitions for delivering humanitarian assistance and deploying military forces (if required).
- The role of regional groups and organizations.
- The role of the United Nations or other international organization.
- Cease-fire/disengagement/stabilization in the crisis area.
- Prisoner exchange between warring parties.
- Weapons control/demobilization.
- Demining.



- Humanitarian relief.
- Refugee/displaced person return.
- Internal political cooperation.
- Counterinsurgency and counterterrorism.
- Antiofficial corruption/illicit criminal operations.
- Strengthening local or regional institutions or organizations.
- Management of factions/actors in the crisis area with political objectives incompatible with, or in direct opposition to U.S. objectives and who will seek to thwart U.S. actions.
- Political transition/elections/democratization.
- Rule of law/police/criminal justice.
- Atrocities/abuses/war crimes prosecution.
- Civil and social order.
- National reconciliation.
- Economic reform and restoration/private investment.
- Public diplomacy.
- Flash point management.

Likewise, a PCC dealing with trade issues would involve considerations related to domestic and foreign economic and political issues, international laws and organizations, and the concerns of departments and agencies involved.

Managing the process by which a PCC conducts business is complicated given the range and complexity of issues addressed. Lessons learned in the PCC process for promoting collaboration and high performance include maintaining a focus on a “high conceptual level.” This includes having participants support the following objectives:

1. Share an understanding of principles, goals, and priorities.

- Bureaucratic interests must be represented, but remember that the final objective is good policy.
- Fully understand the policy context and preferences of their department principals, as well as those represented by others around the table.
- Expand individual frames of reference to gain an understanding of diplomatic, political, military, economic, humanitarian, developmental, and legal perspectives on the policy problem at hand.
- Seek a broad situation assessment, utilizing a wide range of intelligence, diplomatic, allies and friends, and nongovernmental organization (NGO) sources.
- Search for ambiguous assumptions and information gaps.
- Focus on a realistic time horizon.
- Clarify the tough value trade-offs in the policy decisions.
- Match commitments with political will.

2. Support a prudent consensus approach.

- Agree on an effective process plan.
- Strengthen interagency team identity.
- Control internal politics among team members.
- Foster competitive – and constructive – debate.
- Prepare well thought out issue or policy positions backed up by data, examples, or persuasive points of argument.

- Forge a consensus approach for action. Internally, bring together opposing views and develop a consolidated position without diluting or ignoring important issues. Externally, build support with those sharing similar perspectives, and bring in supporting material from outside actors not directly involved in the meetings but who can affect final acceptance of policy decisions (e.g., congressmen, staffers, trade interests, NGOs, etc.). This consideration should be weighed against the desires of higher-level policy groups who prefer to have multiple analyses and options to contemplate in order to determine their own policy recommendations. Awareness of the preferences and operating styles of senior policy groups is crucial for working effectively at the PCC level.
- Keep your boss informed of developments; don't let him or her be blindsided in a higher-level policy forum.

### 3. Maintain vigilance over intra-group management.

- Be well prepared on substantive issues, legal constraints, and the bureaucratic/policy preferences of your principal and the other agencies represented.
- Adjust and self-correct for changing conditions or ineffective group practices.
- Manage time, including competing commitments and responsibilities, in order to advance the analytical and decision process and produce required policy products on time.

- Seek to be constructive and be willing to compromise and make trade offs.
- Participants in such meetings are not immune to considerations of their professional reputations and careers. Professionalism and the constructive handling of disagreements are important to successful operations.
- Keep pace—stay ahead of the crisis environment.
- Anticipate media/press issues and congressional concerns.

Meetings in response to crisis conditions are likely to experience additional complications. Crises are characterized by fast moving events, pressure to act quickly to minimize damage or prevent crisis escalation, partial and sometimes confusing or conflicting information or intelligence, and the complexities of multitasking and coordinating the activities of a wide range of actors and interested parties. Moreover, in crisis situations similar to the post-9/11 period in the George W. Bush first term, PCCs may find that most policy decisions are handled at the PC and DC level. The PCC groups may find that they are dealing with regularly changing higher level policy directives, uncertainty about policy deliberations and decisions, and limited representative authority from their department to make decisions because the rapid pace of developments keeps most serious decision issues at the PC or DC level.

For the individual, the keys to being an effective member of a crisis management team are: (1) flexibility in thinking, (2) maintaining involvement, (3) maintaining alertness, (4) maintaining a strategic focus, (5) excellent writing skills, and (6) being unbiased.

- Flexibility in thinking: The preparation process for this annual report involves interviewing a range of experienced, senior U.S. Government officials who have served on or supported principals in high level policy groups. The one attribute most frequently mentioned by these senior officials over the years as needed for working effectively in interagency groups is flexibility in thinking. Participants must be able to understand the concerns and perspectives of other participants, quickly recognize new problems, and be creative in developing new approaches for dealing with problems. Reaching a consensus decision does not mean settling for the lowest common denominator, but instead balancing competing concerns to achieve the best policy recommendations for U.S. interests. Participants also must be able to understand the viewpoints of other participants and agencies, and capable of “reframing” their perspectives on analyses and issues as events, actors, and interagency needs change. A firmly fixed view of the world and U.S. Government priorities becomes an obstacle to finding creative and effective solutions to complex, multidimensional problems.
- Maintaining involvement: Effective participation in working groups includes being an active team member, making insightful (but not redundant) contributions at meetings, knowing your department’s positions and equities, keeping senior officials in your department informed, staying abreast of the latest developments (e.g., reading the intelligence reports and embassy cables), doing a share of the drafting of papers,

and being reliable (i.e., producing what you say you are going to do). This skill also includes being able to contribute to effective meeting dynamics in often unstructured situations, including supporting processes that move the analytical and policy issue paper writing process along expeditiously, and contribute to producing a high quality written document in a timely fashion.

- Maintaining alertness: Although self-evident at a superficial level, the day-to-day demands of working at the NSC or on interagency groups can be grueling, often 12-14 hours a day, 7 days a week. NSC Directors frequently work on 3-5 PCCs simultaneously, sometimes working multiple taskings from each group in addition to their normal NSC staff responsibilities. Moreover, NSC Senior Directors also have responsibility for the 3-6 Directors who work under their supervision. Working in support of the President requires having physical and mental stamina. Crises that last weeks and months are even more physically and mentally demanding. They require perseverance and a willingness to spend long hours attending meetings and doing follow up work (as in the case, for example, of the Counter-Terrorism Security Group PCC which meets twice daily).
- Maintaining a strategic focus: Although individual working group members normally represent individual agencies, they must be able to concentrate on strategic interests and broad objectives, and not get bogged down in tactical or trivial issues that are the responsibilities of the policy implementing departments.

They must keep in mind that they are writing recommendations for presidential action that must serve the interests of all agencies as well as the nation. Participants must be able to succinctly identify the critical central issues in frequently volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous situations.

- Excellent writing skills: The typical policy issue paper written for the NSA or the President is only a couple of pages. PCC level issue papers on complex topics are only a few pages long. Working group members must be able to write short, well-organized documents which clearly and succinctly describe the policy issue being considered, why the issue is important enough to warrant presidential attention, and what options the President has for dealing with the situation. Participants must be able to think and write at the presidential level and present concise, clear analysis and arguments. A clearly written, well-organized issue paper allows for more effective use of a senior policymaker's time.
- Being unbiased: Being unbiased means coming to working groups without personal agendas or predetermined, inflexible positions. Effective participation on working groups requires the ability to be objective about different perspectives and aspects of issues, and being able to develop balanced analyses and recommendations that take into account the many concerns and equities of the interagency. Written recommendations for the President must clearly present facts and data, what is known, unknown or assumed,

without partiality. Participants also must be able to step back from the crisis periodically to see if interests, dynamics, or its strategic context have changed. Effective PCCs must be able to periodically question assumptions established earlier in the crisis management cycle.

## **Department of State.**

Under the Constitution, the executive branch and the Congress have responsibilities for foreign policy. President George Washington's first cabinet included Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson. The Secretary of State is fourth in line of succession to the presidency. Within the executive branch, the Department of State is the lead foreign affairs agency and the Secretary of State is the President's principal foreign policy advisor. The Department also supports the foreign affairs activities of other U.S. Government entities, including the Department of Commerce and the Agency for International Development.

As the lead foreign affairs agency, State has the primary role in:

- Leading interagency coordination in developing and implementing foreign policy;
- Managing the foreign affairs budget and other foreign affairs resources;
- Leading and coordinating U.S. representation abroad, and conveying U.S. foreign policy to foreign governments and international organizations through U.S. embassies and consulates in foreign countries and diplomatic missions to international organizations;



- Conducting negotiations and concluding agreements and treaties on issues ranging from trade to nuclear weapons; and,
- Coordinating and supporting international activities of other U.S. agencies and officials.

The Department of State, like many other cabinet departments, is a centralized organization, with the Secretary of State at the helm. Beneath the Secretary in the senior hierarchy are other principals—the Deputy Secretary, Under Secretaries, and Counselor of the Department. In rank order, assistant secretaries for regional bureaus follow.

Although the Department of State is the lead government foreign affairs agency, it does not dictate foreign policy for the U.S. Government. Because so many executive branch departments have international programs, there is an inherent difference in perspective at interagency meetings. Secretary Powell, in his testimony before Congress on April 23, 2003, addressed the phenomenon in this way:

With respect to what's going on within the administration, it's not the first time I have seen discussions within the administration between one department or another. I have seen four straight administrations at a senior level; and thus it has been, and thus it has always been, and thus it should be. There should be tension within the national security team, and from that tension, arguments are surfaced for the President. And the one who decides, the one who makes the foreign policy decisions for the United States of America, is not the Secretary of State, or the Secretary of Defense or the National Security Advisor. It's the President.

In conducting international affairs, the Secretary attends cabinet meetings, NSC meetings chaired by the NSA, and PCs. When the Secretary is traveling

abroad a deputy may be designated to attend as State's senior representative. For example, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice designated Deputy Secretary John Negroponte to attend PCs in her absence. Similarly, Deputy Secretary Negroponte has asked Undersecretaries or Assistant Secretaries to attend DCs. Undersecretary for Political Affairs Nicholas Burns is a prime example of an undersecretary who has attended PCs and DCs, in part because of the expertise he brings to bear. Regarding PCCs, assistant secretaries or their deputies usually attend. Delegating others to attend interagency meetings has been a fairly common practice in all administrations.

Frequently, special senior interagency committees are established. During the Clinton administration, an interagency "Coordinating Sub Group" on terrorism, whose members included State's Ambassador for Counter-Terrorism Affairs and similarly ranked officials from DoD, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) met under the chairmanship of a senior NSC official. This practice persists in the current Bush administration. For example, there is an "Executive Steering Group," chaired by a senior NSC advisor, which deals with a wide variety of issues (including Iraq) and a Counter-Terrorism Security Group that reports directly to the Deputies Committee.

After the August 1998 bombings at the U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania, Secretary of State Madeleine Albright appointed Accountability Review Boards (ARBs) for both events.<sup>9</sup> These boards were chaired by retired Admiral William Crowe, a former CJCS and later U.S. Ambassador to Great Britain. This was done in accordance with U.S. laws that mandate convening such boards any time there is a

security-related incident causing serious injury, loss of life, or significant damage of property at or related to a U.S. mission abroad. In brief, ARBs investigate and to make recommendations. Retired and active duty representatives from State, the FBI, CIA, and the private sector served on the two boards.

Among the recommendations from the ARBs chaired by Crowe was an appropriation of \$1.4 billion a year for at least 10 years for embassy construction and repair. Albright writes in her autobiography:

By the time I left office, we had gained agreement for appropriations close to the level recommended by Admiral Crowe, an agreement that was critical because we had learned that the dangers to our personnel were no longer localized but global. There was no such thing as a low-risk post. If we had soft spots, we could expect our enemies to exploit them.

Below this level, there are numerous other interagency groups. They may meet recurrently or just once. After Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait and Operation DESERT STORM, there were a series of interagency sessions on a wide range of U.S. policy issues in the Gulf. Similarly, during the Clinton administration, the State Department called a one-time interagency meeting on Lebanon when the issue of the passport restriction on American citizens was under review. Officers at the GS-15 or equivalent rank were asked to attend from a wide array of agencies—DoD, Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), CIA, and the like. Likewise, a variety of interagency meetings were held before, during, and after Operation IRAQI FREEDOM. The purpose of such meetings may not be to decide the issue, but to exchange views and lay groundwork for issues expected to be considered by PCCs, DCs, and PCs. Staff work for such meetings

may be narrowly focused, and handled even by a single office in a bureau.

One State Department office created explicitly for the purpose of promoting interagency collaboration on policy development and execution is the Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization (S/CRS). Established on August 5, 2004, the mission of S/CRS is “to lead, coordinate and institutionalize U.S. Government civilian capacity to prevent or prepare for post-conflict situations, and to help stabilize and reconstruct societies in transition from conflict or civil strife, so they can reach a sustainable path toward peace, democracy and a market economy.”<sup>10</sup> The State Department’s authority for this mission is derived from National Security Presidential Directive-44 (NSPD-44) concerning the “Management of Interagency Efforts Concerning Reconstruction and Stabilization” which directs the Secretary of State to “coordinate and lead integrated United States Government efforts, involving all U.S. Departments and Agencies with relevant capabilities, to prepare, plan for, and conduct stabilization and reconstruction activities.”<sup>11</sup> Working under the authority of NSPD-44, S/CRS has established a number of sub-PCC working groups to plan, prepare, and conduct stabilization and reconstruction missions. The office works with the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the Joint Staff, Justice, Treasury, the Department of Labor, Office of Management and Budget and other government agencies to devise interagency organizational structures, identify resource requirements and prepare interagency mobilization plans, coordinate political-military planning for stabilization and reconstruction

operations, conduct decision support exercises and prepare implementation strategies.

The staff work done for the Secretary of State and his or her principals for interagency meetings is a complex and highly organized undertaking. The Office of the Executive Secretary (S/ES) is key. S/ES is located on State's "seventh floor" and is comprised of some 175-plus employees. It is responsible for coordinating State Department's internal operations, liaising between the bureaus and principals, running the State Department's 24\7 operations center, organizing and staffing the Secretary's foreign travel, and liaising between the NSC and other executive branch departments. More specifically, S/ES is responsible for tasking papers within the State Department for interagency meetings involving the principals. S/ES sets the due dates for these papers in line with the time of the meetings. An Executive Secretary and four Deputy Executive Secretaries lead S/ES. The Executive Secretary traditionally is a very senior, career Foreign Service officer.

The relationship between State's Executive Secretary and Executive Secretaries in the National Security Council and DoD is very important. It is often through their communications, both verbally and in writing that notification of high-level meetings is made. State Executive Secretaries also may receive debriefs from their counterparts on decisions from more informal meetings or discussions among the Secretary of State, Secretary of Defense, and National Security Advisor.

One aspect of the State Department which sets it apart in the interagency process is its own special composition. In his memoirs, James Baker, former Secretary of State under Bush 41, wrote that,

Without a doubt, the State Department has the most unique bureaucratic culture I've ever encountered. In most of the federal government, the work is guided by a small number of political appointees who work together with civil service — the career bureaucracy that is designated to be above politics and provide institutional memory and substantive expertise. But at State there is also the Foreign Service, the elite corps of foreign affairs officers who staff the Department's country and functional desks in Washington and our embassies abroad.<sup>12</sup>

At interagency meetings, the State Department representatives, whether in support of a Principal or on their own, bring to the table a wealth of on the ground, in-depth experiences in dealing with foreign governments and cultures from around the globe, which helps frame their recommendations and conclusions. In addition, by virtue of State's position as the lead government agency in foreign affairs, the State Department has an unusual breadth of information to tap — from all agencies. In his memoirs, Secretary Shultz wrote that,

As secretary, I could see that I had at hand an extraordinary information machine: it could produce a flow of reports on what was happening in real time, background on what had been done before and how that had worked, analyses of alternative courses of action, and ideas on what might be done. The Department is a great engine of diplomacy for the secretary to use in carrying out the president's foreign policy.<sup>13</sup>

## **Department of Defense.**

To understand and have an appreciation of DoD's role in the interagency process, it is instructive to look briefly at DoD's history and how it evolved into the organization it is today.

One should remember that the department did not exist, nor did the JCS receive statutory authority, until the late 1940s. Up until and through World War II, there were two military departments—War and Navy. Both the Secretary of War and Secretary of the Navy reported directly to the President. Conflicting judgments often arose between the Army and Navy over critical issues, including allocation of resources, strategic priorities, and command arrangements. Disagreements sometimes affected how military operations were conducted. To coordinate efforts during World War II, some 75 interservice agencies and interdepartmental committees were formed. These ad hoc arrangements worked, but only because of the nation's vast resources were we able to compensate for mistakes, inefficiencies, and internal divisions.

The National Security Act of 1947 created a National Military Establishment (NME) headed by a Secretary of Defense. The three secretaries of the military departments (including the Secretary of the newly formed Air Force) retained their powers, subject only to the authority of the Secretary of Defense to exercise "general direction, authority, and control." The newly formed NSC, chaired by the President, included the Secretaries of State, Defense, Army, Navy, and Air Force, and the Chairman of the National Security Resources Board. During this nascent phase of the NSC, the military's perspectives were well represented by occupying four of the seven NSC seats.

The NME was replaced by DoD under provisions of the 1949 Amendment to the National Security Act. The 1949 Amendment also increased the powers of the Secretary of Defense, diminished those of the military departments, and provided for a Chairman with no direct military command function to preside over the JCS (and the Service Chiefs as a corporate

body). Moreover, with this amendment, the secretaries of the military departments lost their membership on the NSC.

There were two legislative acts during the Eisenhower administration (1953 and 1958) that consolidated more authority in the hands of the Secretary of Defense. Given President Eisenhower's military background, it should be no surprise that he was a firm believer in centralized control and a clearly defined chain of command. A fairly strong Secretary of Defense, together with a weakly structured JCS that functioned as a committee, prevailed through the 1960s (mainly the Robert McNamara years) and the 1970s. It was not until the Goldwater-Nichols Act of 1986 that the military gained a greater voice in interagency affairs. The Act provided, among other things, for a stronger and more active CJCS who would be the principal military advisor to the President, the NSC, and Secretary of Defense (as compared to a Chairman who previously represented the views of the four Chiefs of the Services). Goldwater-Nichols also significantly increased the powers of the combatant commanders and clarified the chain of command from the President to the Secretary of Defense to the unified commanders. This ascension of the commanders, in effect, further weakened the influence of the individual service secretaries and chiefs.

Today, DoD is a centralized organization with power clearly resting in the hands of the Secretary of Defense and, secondarily, in the hands of the CJCS. The Secretary of Defense, together with the Commander-in-Chief, epitomizes the principle of "civilian control of the military." Ultimate authority within DoD rests with the Secretary. The three Service Secretaries report directly to him, as do the senior civilian officials in the



Office of the Secretary of Defense. The CJCS, who is the senior ranking member of the U.S. armed forces but by law does not exercise military command, also reports to the Secretary of Defense. While the unified combatant commanders, by statute, report to the Secretary of Defense, by practice they clear (or at least discuss) all positions with the CJCS prior to communicating with the Secretary. The JCS refers to the Joint Staffs of the Service Chiefs, while the Joint Staff refers to the staff who work directly for the Chairman (CJCS), not for the JCS.

The Secretary of Defense and CJCS are the primary Defense players in the interagency arena. They represent the Department at NSC meetings chaired by the President, and at PC meetings chaired by the NSA. Their deputies, the Deputy Secretary of Defense and Vice CJCS, attend the DC meetings (throughout the first Bush and the Clinton administrations, however, the Secretary of Defense was represented at the DC meetings by the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy).

At the staff level, virtually all the work in DoD for interagency deliberations is done in the Policy organization for OSD and in the J-5 directorate (Strategy, Plans and Policy) for the Joint Staff. Attendees at the PCC meetings and lower lever interagency groups are Assistant Secretaries, Deputy Assistant Secretaries, and GS-15s from Policy and one- or two-star flag officers and action officers (O-5s and O-6s) from J-5. With regard to homeland defense and defense support to civil authorities (DSCA) issues, the Assistant Secretary for Homeland Defense is the single point of contact for the many directorates and agencies within DoD. It is uncommon for representatives from the unified commands or the individual services to attend

interagency meetings. The possible exception might be if a combatant commander is specifically invited by the President (or NSA) to attend a meeting. The Joint Staff typically represents the combatant commanders in interagency meetings. People from the Joint Staff are quite protective of the fact that they work to fulfill the statutory responsibilities of the CJCS as the principal military advisor to the President, the Secretary of Defense, and the NSC.

Some Presidents have preferred to hear a coordinated DoD position while others wished to hear counterarguments and multiple options. Especially since Goldwater-Nichols, the military's views should be submitted separately from OSD's. Moreover, President Bush, in general, prefers to hear all views, including disagreements between the Secretary of Defense and the CJCS when circumstances allow. However, crisis conditions may affect the President's willingness to pursue extensive debates on competing options. For example, after the 9/11 terrorist attacks, the Secretary of Defense and Deputy Secretary of Defense expressed opinions at a strategy session of senior Presidential advisors. At the conclusion of the meeting, the President's Chief of Staff pulled the two participants aside and admonished, "The President will expect one person to speak for the Department of Defense."<sup>14</sup> Some DoD officials believe strongly that if the OSD civilians and the military have a coordinated position and speak as one voice, the Department's views carry more weight, and DoD officials can be more effective in the interagency process.

Another example of differing voices occurred during the initial deliberations in August 1990 after Iraq invaded Kuwait. After a meeting with the President, then Secretary of Defense Cheney chastised

General Powell, then CJCS, for offering an opinion that the Secretary perceived as political advice. "Colin," he said, "you're the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs. You're not Secretary of State. You're not the National Security Advisor anymore. And you're not Secretary of Defense. So stick to military matters."<sup>15</sup>

This is not to say, however, that military officers should not speak at interagency meetings. They should speak. They are obligated to give their best military advice. Often, military officers are criticized for not speaking out more forcefully. Their reluctance to speak might be because they do not want to be viewed (especially at the lower officer levels) as presenting the views of the CJCS. Another reason for their reluctance may be personality driven, i.e., a certain amount of intimidation by the senior civilians around the table. Nevertheless, some senior flag officers believe strongly that military officers also should comment on nonmilitary matters. They argue that military officers bring a strategic perspective to interagency groups that can help clarify (or question) assumptions, identify conflicting interests, or raise questions about unintended second or third order effects of proposed policies. One former DC participant with extensive government experience recommended that military officers educate themselves more broadly on national security issues (including resource and economic issues, homeland defense and security, intrastate conflict, refugees, and migration, etc.) to be able to better understand how military roles and missions may affect, or are affected by, such traditionally nonmilitary policy matters that increasingly involve or constrain military planning.

Even so, it is important that the proper military advice be given (with officers clearly delineating whether they are representing the "position of the

Chairman” or their own expertise). Most of the civilians at interagency meetings have little or no experience with military operations. They generally do not have an appreciation for what happens “behind the scenes” of any successful military operation. Without getting into the weeds, military officers need to explain what could be accomplished with the use of military forces, and what the limitations are. At the same time, the military should expect at the conclusion of these deliberations to have a clear set of objectives and parameters within which to operate. It is critical that DoD, and especially the uniformed military, be fully engaged in debates taking place in the White House by civilians when use of the military instrument of national policy is being considered.

Traditionally, DoD performs a secondary (or support) role to State’s lead in foreign policy, but plays an active role at interagency meetings in determining the tools of foreign policy. From DoD’s perspective, its three primary concerns are possible uses of military forces, expenditure of Defense resources, and preventing a situation from deteriorating to the point that it requires military intervention. During the current war on terrorism with military operations in Afghanistan and Iraq (and supporting anti-terrorist military actions by other countries), however, DoD plays a more equal role in foreign policy discussions because of coalition military considerations, and political-military and security problems in the two countries. Historically, though, DoD frequently has resisted the involvement of U.S. troops because situations were assessed to not constitute a proper military mission or there are other alternatives available (i.e., other countries’ military forces, UN, NGOs). The Department’s position in such meetings often is to withhold use of U.S. forces

unless they, and only they, possess the capability to perform a function that protects or promotes U.S. security interests.

Ultimately the decision to use military forces may be based upon political interests and not DoD's judgments about the "best" use of combatant forces. For example, in the days leading up to the decision to deploy U.S. forces into Somalia in 1992 to assist humanitarian operations responding to widespread famine, the combatant commander of the U.S. Central Command argued about the deleterious impact on military readiness for dealing with potential threats to higher level U.S. interests in the Persian Gulf and broader Middle East region. Nevertheless, the political decision was that the acute humanitarian and U.S. international leadership interests at the time required U.S. intervention and overrode DoD's concerns about the impact on traditional mission capabilities.

The second frequent DoD concern is the expenditure of resources. Policymakers rarely consider the cost of operations directed by the NSC. This usually is due to the urgency of taking action or a tendency to ignore (or avoid) the fact that ultimately someone has to pay the bill. There also is a common belief that "DoD possesses all the resources." While it is true that Defense's budget is many times larger than State's, there are laws and regulations on precisely how and for what purposes DoD's money may be spent. So, just as use of military forces is not necessarily the best solution, careful attention needs to be paid to the cost of actions taken through the interagency process, and to who will pay it.

The third concern is preventing a situation from deteriorating to the point that it requires military intervention. DoD plays an active role in interagency meetings shaping the strategic situation in many

regions of the world. DoD strives to ensure that U.S. Government policy and resources are adequately coordinated to shape the environment and obtain results favorable to U.S. interests. Working closely with the Department of State, USAID, and other agencies, DoD's involvement in regional programs can be the catalyst for policy changes that could avert future military intervention. A pertinent example was DoD's active role in changing policy regarding Colombia. Until 2002, U.S. policy was based upon helping Colombia reduce its drug production. After 9/11, DoD lobbied hard for a change in the policy and was successful in getting a PC to authorize the development of a new NSPD for Colombia. DoD led the effort to produce NSPD 18 on November 2002—in effect changing the Colombia policy from counterdrug to counter narco-terrorism. This policy's immediate impact was strengthening the Colombian government and avoiding potential security problems that could have triggered a request for more military assets.

The terrorist attacks of 9/11 have broadened the scope of DoD's contacts, roles, and missions in the interagency arena. In response to the attacks, DoD approved the concept of Joint and Interagency Coordination Groups (JIACG) to improve interagency cooperation and improve operational effectiveness for all Regional Combatant Commands, Joint Forces Command (JFCOM), Transportation Command (TRANSCOM), Special Operations Command (SOCOM), and Strategic Command (STRATCOM). JIACGs are tailored to meet the requirements and challenges of each Combatant Commander's Area of Responsibility (AOR), and may include representatives from a wide range of U.S. Government agencies, the intelligence community, and even NGOs such as the American Red Cross.

The JIACG concept seeks to establish operational connections between civilian and military departments and agencies that will improve planning and coordination within the government.<sup>16</sup> The JIACG is intended to be a multifunctional, advisory element that represents the civilian departments and agencies and facilitates information sharing across the interagency community. It provides regular, timely, and collaborative day-to-day working relationships between civilian and military operational planners. JIACGs coordinate where DoD assets need to be on a day to day basis, and with regard to contingency planning. JIACGs support Joint Planning Groups, Joint Operations Groups, Interagency Coordination Groups, and Joint Support Cells. JIACG functions include:

- Participating in combatant command staff crisis planning and assessment.
- Advising the combatant command staff on civilian agency campaign planning.
- Working civilian-military campaign planning issues.
- Providing civilian agency perspectives during military operational planning activities and exercises.
- Presenting unique civilian agency approaches, capabilities & limitations to the military campaign planners.
- Providing vital links to Washington civilian agency campaign planners.
- Arranging interfaces for a number of useful agency crisis planning activities.
- Conducting outreach to key civilian international and regional contacts.

## **The Intelligence Community.**

The primary role of the intelligence community is to provide information that will help policymakers understand the elements and dynamics of the various situations they are dealing with. Information provided by the Director of National Intelligence, CIA, Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA), National Security Agency, National Geospatial Intelligence Agency, National Reconnaissance Office, and other intelligence community components provides analysis about what is happening on the ground, what is the nature of the geographic area of concern, who are the actors, what are their dispositions, and what are their likely intentions. The latter is the most difficult analysis for the intelligence community to produce and often is the most contentious.

The Office of the Director of National Intelligence (ODNI) was established in December 2004 through the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004. The Director of National Intelligence (DNI), who must be confirmed by the U.S. Senate, does not serve as the head of any of the sixteen agencies within the U.S. intelligence community, but establishes objectives and priorities for the intelligence community and manages and directs tasking of collection, analysis, production, and dissemination of national intelligence.<sup>17</sup> The DNI approves requirements for collection and analysis, including requirements responding to the needs of policymakers and other intelligence consumers. The DNI also has responsibility for developing and executing the overall budget for the National Intelligence Program (NIP) and provides advisory tasking to intelligence elements outside of the NIP. The DNI has the authority to establish national



intelligence centers as necessary and is responsible for the management of the Intelligence Community and the National Intelligence Council (NIC) which is accountable for mid-term and long-term strategic analysis and the production of National Intelligence Estimates. The DNI also is responsible for ensuring accurate all-source intelligence, competitive analysis, and that alternative views are brought to the attention of policymakers.

Since the establishment of the ODNI in 2004 and the appointment of its first director in April 2005, DNI representatives have assumed the role of primary intelligence support to the President and the NSC interagency system. For example, the DNI is now the statutory intelligence advisor to the National Security Council, replacing the DCIA. The DNI serves on the PC, and likewise, the DNI Principal Deputy Director serves on the Deputies Committee. However, the DCIA and DDCIA attend NSC, PC and DC meetings (respectively) when appropriate for CIA related intelligence matters. All policy statements related to the intelligence community are vetted through the ODNI.

Established to oversee and direct the implementation of the National Intelligence Program, the ODNI serves as an interface between the Intelligence Community and policymakers. Most intelligence taskers are routed through the ODNI to ensure proper coordination, although finished intelligence products often move directly from each agency to NSC members and other policymakers. Many other responsibilities and functions of intelligence community components (such as the CIA) have not changed with the establishment of the ODNI. Of note, though, the ODNI now produces the President's Daily Brief, with input from across

the Community. Whenever covert operations issues are being considered, the DCIA or DDCIA are involved because the CIA retains its responsibility as the executive agency responsible for covert operations.

Including representatives from the various agencies in the intelligence community in PCCs or other policy planning groups is critical because reviewing existing intelligence information and determining requirements for additional intelligence collection and analysis should be one of the first steps in considering national security issues. Analysis from the intelligence community will help decisionmakers better understand the actual conditions (political, social, economic, military, transportation, communications, public health, etc.) in other countries, the capabilities of groups or countries in the area, the motivations and likely intentions of leaders, the interests and capabilities of other stakeholders, and what the potential threats are to U.S. interests and personnel both abroad and within the United States. The intelligence community also can provide assessments of the likely effects (near and long term) of proposed courses of action on specific individuals, groups, or national and regional populations. However, remember that you will never get all the information you want or feel that you need. The intelligence community is highly capable, but not omniscient.

An example of intelligence support to the interagency is the National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC). The NCTC is responsible for integrating and analyzing all intelligence pertaining to terrorism and counterterrorism (CT) and conducting strategic operational planning by integrating all appropriate instruments of national power. The purpose of the coordinating role of the NCTC is to ensure

that all elements of the executive branch—beyond simply elements of the Intelligence Community—are coordinated in their counterterrorism efforts. The Director of the NCTC monitors the implementation of these plans and has access to information from every element of the government relevant to assessing their progress and implementation. In this role, the Director of the NCTC reports directly to the President (vice the DNI), although in practice Strategic Operational Plans are approved through the DC and PC process.

Ultimately, it is up to the policymaker to decide how he or she uses intelligence; and there are many reasons why a policymaker will or will not use intelligence. For example, intelligence information enhances power in policy discussions when it bolsters one's own position, but it may be discounted if it calls into question the wisdom of following a preferred policy path. Policymakers must work out how to resolve often conflicting information or unknowns resulting from incomplete intelligence. Policymakers may request focused analyses from specific intelligence agencies, or community-wide assessments in the form of in-depth National Intelligence Estimates (NIEs) or rapid assessment Special NIEs (SNIEs) under the authority of the NIC. Conversely, policymakers may resist additional intelligence analysis if they worry that their policy positions will not be supported by the results.

Although the intelligence community's mission is to produce objective analyses that support the policy process, it often is drawn into policy deliberations by providing assessments about the likely outcome of proposed courses of action, by determining what kinds of policies are most likely to influence leaders or groups, and by advising on whether different factions in foreign governments (including

intelligence services) are likely to help or hinder the implementation of policies. The involvement of the Director of Central Intelligence George Tenet (July 1997-July 2004), with Israeli and Palestinian security services on security issues in a possible peace agreement reflects how intelligence sometimes has a direct involvement in the implementation of U.S. policy. If directed by the President, the CIA also can be used to implement foreign policy through covert action.

### **Homeland Security Council Organization.<sup>18</sup>**

In response to the 9/11 attacks and the continuing terrorist threats to the United States, President Bush established the Homeland Security Council (HSC) in October 2001 and a new Department of Homeland Security in March 2003. Established on October 8, 2001, the HSC serves as the mechanism for ensuring coordination of homeland security-related activities of executive departments and agencies and effective development and implementation of homeland security policies.<sup>19</sup> The members of the Council include the President, the Vice President, the Secretary of Homeland Security, the Secretary of the Treasury, the Secretary of Defense, the Attorney General, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, the Secretary of Transportation, the Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Director of National Intelligence, the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, the Assistant to the President for Homeland Security and Counterterrorism (APHS/CT), the Chief of Staff to the President, and the Chief of Staff to the Vice President. The Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs and the Counsel to the President are invited to attend all meetings of the HSC. The Secretary of

State and the Chairman of the JCS (or Vice CJCS) have regularly attended HSC meetings during the Bush administration, and the Secretary of Agriculture, the Secretary of the Interior, the Secretary of Energy, the Secretary of Labor, the Secretary of Commerce, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, the Assistant to the President for Economic Policy, and the Assistant to the President for Domestic Policy are invited to attend meetings pertaining to their responsibilities. The heads of other executive departments and agencies and other senior officials are invited to attend Council meetings when appropriate.

The HSC meets at the President's direction and in the last year normally has met about bimonthly – although more frequently when events and issues dictate. For example, the HSC met daily in response to the plot to hijack passenger airliners originating in England during the summer of 2006. When the President is absent from a meeting of the Council, at the President's direction, the Vice President may preside. The APHS/CT is responsible for determining the agenda, ensuring that necessary papers are prepared, and recording Council actions and Presidential decisions. Like the National Security Advisor in matters of national security, the APHS/CT serves as the President's key homeland security and counterterrorism advisor in the White House; Frances Townsend leads the HSC staff, and also co-leads, along with the NSA, the NSC's Combating Terrorism Strategy directorate. The APHS/CT conducts regular sessions with HSC principals as well as chairing frequent meetings of the HSC staff and representatives from the NSC. Currently the HSC staff conducts the day-to-day management of homeland security affairs for the White House and

numbers approximately 40 policy positions including detailees and assignees from the U.S. Secret Service and other Department of Homeland Security agencies, DoD, the FBI, the Department of Health and Human Services, and individuals assigned from other executive branch agencies.

### **The HSC and the Policy Process.**

The primary role of the HSC and the APHS/CT is to advise the President on homeland security and counterterrorism matters. Some national security commentators contend there is not a discernible difference between national security and homeland security—that one flows into the other. If national security focuses on protecting U.S. interests around the world, homeland security begins at the nation’s waters’ edge and protects our interests internally from terrorist threats, presumably emanating from abroad. As defined in the President’s *National Strategy for Homeland Security* (July 2002),<sup>20</sup> “homeland security” is a concerted national effort to prevent terrorist attacks within the United States, reduce American’s vulnerability to terrorism, and minimize the damage and recover from attacks that do occur. In the years since 9/11, the HSC has taken an “all hazards” approach to its mission of protecting the U.S. homeland from harm, and homeland security programs focus on activities within the United States and its territories, or on activities in support of domestically-based systems and processes. While homeland security concerns and national security concerns both encompass threats to the United States, homeland security includes not only issues pertaining to attacks within the United States by foreign interests or factions, but also attacks

perpetrated by domestic groups not affiliated with external organizations or nations. Homeland security also addresses circumstances that occur within U.S. borders, such as pandemic influenza, and responses to national disasters and emergencies such as Hurricanes Katrina and Rita that struck the U.S. Gulf coast in August and September 2005. Thus, while the NSC addresses activities outside of the United States and combating terrorism overseas, at a minimum, national security and homeland security have large areas of overlapping responsibilities. This is particularly evident when examining the make-up of the NSC and the HSC.

A comparison of NSC and HSC organizations reveals that all 11 members (or statutory advisors or frequent substantive invitees) of the NSC are official HSC members (the President, the Vice President, the Secretary of Defense, the Attorney General, and the Director of National Intelligence) or invited participants (the Secretary of State, the Chairman of the JCS, the Chief of Staff to the President, the Assistant to the President for National Security, the White House Counsel, the Assistant to the President for Economic Policy, and the Director of the Office of Management and Budget). At the staff level, some directorates of the NSC (such as that under the DAP/DNSA for Combating Terrorism) have daily contact with HSC directorates. These dual responsibilities between the NSC and the HSC illustrate the post 9/11 evolution and overlap of homeland security and more traditional international national security affairs. One result is that President Bush has held several formal joint NSC-HSC meetings – such as those during the summer of 2006 concerning the threat to hijack passenger airliners originating in England.

Regardless of its relationship to the NSC, the HSC has numerous priorities in policy development. These include supporting the President and his objective of ensuring the security of the United States, and ensuring that policies associated with homeland security are based upon strategic national security interests and not political pressures. A core function of the HSC is to recommend policies to the President that are integrated and have been coordinated across the government. When circumstances involving global terrorism with domestic implications occur, the APHS/CT and the National Security Advisor are expected to act in concert. Because homeland security involves a wide swath of domestic issues—some of which have significant international components (e.g., visa policy, port security, pandemic issues, etc.)—HSC coordination challenges can involve a wide range of domestically oriented executive branch agencies; the Congress; and state, local, and private interests. Preventive strategies for domestic defense that are likely to require state-level resource commitments; affect immigration, trade, or other economic issues; produce outcomes that are harder to visibly demonstrate (i.e., policies that produce greater security means that potential attacks are thwarted and become “non-events”); and affect a wide range of federal, state, and local (not to mention private sector) entities are highly likely to have local political as well as national security effects.

In general, the HSC provides policy support to the President on homeland security matters. HSC serves as the conduit into and from the President (and other White House offices) on policy matters. HSC is responsible for pulling together the perspectives of DHS and other government agencies that might be affected by proposed homeland security-related policy and



coordinating those views through to a policy decision, and then monitoring the implementation of the policy. The HSC deals mainly with domestic policy issues, but also may play a major role in the consideration of issues and policy recommendations related to Canada, Mexico, and other actors in the immediate continental United States geographic region. These bilateral policy issues include air transport security, maritime security, and border security, as well as other more traditional national security policy matters that involve NSC policy areas. HSC also is responsible for understanding the domestic implications of potential policy decisions in the homeland security area. DHS, on the other hand, is responsible for coordinating with state and local officials and first responders, and for informing the HSC of state and local concerns with regard to homeland security matters and potential policy issues. DHS also is responsible for letting state and local officials know what policies or DHS activities occur that affect state and local administrations and business.

Like the PC for the NSC, the PC for the HSC acts as the President's senior level policy review and coordination committee, and seeks to ensure that, as much as possible, policy decisions brought to the President reflect a consensus between the relevant departments and agencies, but also clearly present any unresolved disagreements. Typically, the HSC PC meets regularly, but adjusts its frequency depending upon circumstances such as crisis situations or increased threat levels. The types of issues considered by the PC and DC of the HSC include cyber-security; bioterrorism; air, rail, road, and maritime security; preparedness and protection against terrorism and natural disasters; intelligence and information sharing; and coordination and communication with federal,

state, and local authorities as well as the private sector. Since the HSC's inception, President Bush has issued over 18 Homeland Security Presidential Directives and about a dozen Executive Orders dealing with homeland security issues.

The APHS/CT and the HSC staff (as well as Principals and Deputies when appropriate) are responsible for ensuring interagency coordination with the Department of Homeland Security, other Cabinet Departments, and the Intelligence Community (including the NCTC). Furthermore, the Assistant to the President for Homeland Security meets regularly with the President's other senior advisors, as well as the Vice President's senior advisors, and staff from other White House offices. The overlapping relationship between homeland security and traditional national security issues is reflected by the fact that over the last year, roughly one-fifth of HSC-related meetings have been co-chaired by members of the NSC staff.

### **Department of Homeland Security.**

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security was formed on March 1, 2003, through the merger of nearly 30 programs and agencies (over 180,000 personnel) from throughout the Federal government. Headed by a cabinet-level Secretary of Homeland Security, DHS has a stated mission to lead a unified national effort to secure America through preventing and deterring terrorist attacks and protecting against and responding to threats and hazards to the Nation. DHS also "will ensure safe and secure borders, welcome lawful immigrants and visitors, and promote the free-flow of commerce."<sup>21</sup>

To accomplish this mission, DHS has identified seven “Strategic Goals”:<sup>22</sup>

1. *Awareness.* Identify and understand threats, assess vulnerabilities, determine potential impacts and disseminate timely information to the country’s homeland security partners and the American public.

2. *Prevention.* Detect, deter and mitigate threats to the U.S. homeland.

3. *Protection.* Safeguard the American people and their freedoms, critical infrastructure, property, and the economy of the nation from acts of terrorism, natural disasters, or other emergencies.

4. *Response.* Lead, manage and coordinate the national response to acts of terrorism, natural disasters, or other emergencies.

5. *Recovery.* Lead national, state, local, and private sector efforts to restore services and rebuild communities after acts of terrorism, natural disasters, or other emergencies.

6. *Service.* Serve the public effectively by facilitating lawful trade, travel and immigration.

7. *Organizational Excellence.* Value the Department’s most important resource, its people, and create a culture that promotes a common identity, innovation, mutual respect, accountability, and teamwork to achieve efficiencies, effectiveness, and operational synergies.

DHS is charged with analyzing intelligence, assessing threats, guarding U.S. borders and airports, protecting the critical infrastructure of the country, and coordinating emergency response (including natural disaster assistance). The Department has broad responsibility for a wide range of functions and activities required to safeguard the citizens of the United States, including coastal security, customs, immigration,

transportation security, infrastructure protection, emergency response, and information systems security. Its intelligence functions include the analysis of information and intelligence from the FBI, ODNI, CIA, and other Federal agencies to assess potential terrorist threats to the American homeland. During 2006, DHS implemented a major reorganization based upon lessons learned from the operations of the Department since its inception. To fully perform its mission, DHS now has four major "Directorates," six other operational Components (besides FEMA, which is also a Directorate), and 18 support Components.

Because of overlap between the global war on terrorism, homeland defense, and homeland security, DHS works with DoD's Assistant Secretary for Homeland Defense, and with a number of other DoD and U.S. Government entities, including Northern Command, as mentioned above in the section on the Department of Defense. In addition to DoD, DHS works on a daily basis with the DNI, CIA, and other elements of the Intelligence Community, as well as the FBI, to coordinate intelligence and strategic intelligence analysis.

The DHS and the HSC face several daunting challenges based upon the breadth of their responsibilities and number of Federal entities involved. Trying to coordinate activities that range from the Coast Guard to the Secret Service to the Federal Emergency Management Agency continues to be a challenge that the recent DHS reorganization is intended to meet more effectively. Now merged into a single Department for more than 4 years, the components are making measured progress in understanding each other's roles and missions—and coordinating their activities and operations, where appropriate.

The reorganization of DHS in 2006 was intended to capitalize on the successful lessons learned during its brief existence, create new entities to more effectively coordinate the operations of the many components of the agency, and improve strategic planning and policy coordination. Much remains to be done, especially refining areas of responsibility, developing common doctrine, unifying procedures, and enhancing the effectiveness of working together.

The national security process is fairly manageable because it involves a limited number of key players—State, Defense (including the JCS), the intelligence community, and NSC staff—all of whom have personnel who know and have worked with each other over the years. In contrast, the HSC has eight departments and agencies, plus the White House, directly involved, and another eight departments possibly involved depending upon the issue being addressed.

Despite the difficulties of melding nearly 30 formerly separate programs and agencies, DHS, and its work through the HSC, has shown that the country is capable of responding in innovative ways to new challenges that emerge and that the myriad departments and agencies of the executive branch can learn to work together to advance U.S. national security efforts.

## APPENDIX A

### HISTORICAL NOMENCLATURE OF PRESIDENTIAL NATIONAL SECURITY POLICY DECISION DOCUMENTS

Truman	National Security Council papers (NSC)
Eisenhower	National Security Council papers (NSC)
Kennedy	National Security Action Memorandum (NSAM)
Johnson	National Security Action Memorandum (NSAM)
Nixon/Ford	National Security Decision Memorandum (NSDM)
Carter	Presidential Directive (PD)
Reagan	National Security Decision Directive (NSDD)
Bush	National Security Directive (NSD)
Clinton	Presidential Decision Directive (PDD)
Bush	National Security Presidential Directive (NSPD) <sup>23</sup>

Note: Presidents use Executive Orders and NSPDs (or their historical equivalents) to authorize most executive actions. In addition, the President uses directives called “findings” to authorize covert action.

## ENDNOTES - CHAPTER 3

1. The authors are indebted to Leonard H. Hawley, whose experiences as a Deputy Assistant Secretary at both DoD and the State Department, and as an NSC Director, provided numerous insights into interagency dynamics, objectives, and lessons; to Phil Lago, Executive Secretary, National Security Council; and Lieutenant Colonel James Regenor, USAF, NSC Deputy Exec Sec; David Trulio, HSC Executive Secretary; Fred Schwien, DHS Executive Secretary, and Everett Kaplan, DHS Deputy Exec Sec; David Shedd, DNI Chief of Staff, and Matthew F. Ferraro, Special Assistant to the Chief of Staff Office of the DNI; Saadia Sarkis, Interagency Coordinator, State Department Secretariat; Colonel Jeff Mello, USA, Director, and Jan P. Ithier, Deputy Director, NORAD-USNORTHCOM Washington Office.

2. "National Security Council," April 2007, U.S. Government White House Website, [www.whitehouse.gov/nsc/](http://www.whitehouse.gov/nsc/).

3. These groups were called Interagency Working Groups, IWGs, pronounced "iwigs", during the Clinton administration. They also were called Policy Coordination Committees, or PCCs, during the administration of George H. W. Bush, 1989-92.

4. The National Security Act of 1947, Public Law No. 235, 80th Cong., 61 Stat. 496 (July 26, 1947), as amended.

5. United States Institute of Peace, *Passing the Baton: Challenges of Statecraft for the New Administration*, Washington, DC, 2001; *Report of the President's Special Review Board*, February 26, 1987.

6. *Report of the President's Special Review Board*, February 26, 1987.

7. *Ibid.*

8. Primary support for summits dealing principally with economic issues are provided by the National Economic Council staff or a designated Assistant Secretary or Deputy Assistant Secretary of State responsible for the political-economic issues of the summit.

9. Madeleine Albright, *Madam Secretary*, New York: Miramax Books, 2003.

10. U.S. Department of State website, Bureaus/Offices Reporting Directly to the Secretary, Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization, April 2007, at [www.state.gov/s/crs/](http://www.state.gov/s/crs/).

11. Federation of American Scientists website at [www.fas.org/irp/offdocs/nsdp/nsdpd-44.html](http://www.fas.org/irp/offdocs/nsdp/nsdpd-44.html).

12. James A. Baker, III, *The Politics of Diplomacy*, New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1995.

13. George P. Shultz, *Turmoil and Triumph*, New York: Charles Schribner's Sons, 1993.

14. Bob Woodward and Dan Balz, "At Camp David: Advise and Dissent," *The Washington Post*, January 31, 2002.

15. Colin L. Powell, *My American Journey*, New York: Random House, 1995, p. 465.

16. Joint Forces Command website, April 2007, at [www.jfcom.mil/about/factjiacg.htm](http://www.jfcom.mil/about/factjiacg.htm).

17. U.S. Senate Committee on Governmental Affairs, "Summary of Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004," December 6, 2004, at [www.globalsecurity.org/intell/library/congress/2004rpt/s2845summary.htm](http://www.globalsecurity.org/intell/library/congress/2004rpt/s2845summary.htm).

18. Homeland Security Presidential Directive-1, October 29, 2001, U.S. Government White House Website, at [www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2001/10/20011030-1.htm](http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2001/10/20011030-1.htm).

19. "An Act to Establish the Department of Homeland Security, and for other purposes," H. R. 5005, 107th Congress, 2002, retrieved April 9, 2007, from LexisNexis Congressional database. Sec. 1004. Other Functions and Activities:



For the purpose of more effectively coordinating the policies and functions of the United States Government relating to homeland security, the Council shall –

- (1) assess the objectives, commitments, and risks of the United States in the interest of homeland security and to make resulting recommendations to the President;
- (2) oversee and review homeland security policies of the Federal Government and make resulting recommendations to the President; and
- (3) perform such other functions as the President may direct.

20. Department of Homeland Security Website, The National Strategy For Homeland Security, April 2007, at [www.dhs.gov/about/history/publication\\_0005.shtm](http://www.dhs.gov/about/history/publication_0005.shtm).

21. Department of Homeland Security Website, “About the Department of Homeland Security: Structure and Organization, Strategic Plan,” April 2007, at [www.dhs.gov/about/](http://www.dhs.gov/about/).

22. *Ibid.*

23. See Federation of American Scientists website at [www.fas.org/irp/offdocs/nspd/index.html](http://www.fas.org/irp/offdocs/nspd/index.html), for an unclassified list of NSPDs.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **LEARNING TO PLAY THE GAME: THE NATIONAL SECURITY POLICYMAKING PROCESS**

**Clayton K.S. Chun and Frank L. Jones**

A few weeks after the horrifying events of September 11, 2001 (9/11), General Peter Pace, Vice Chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, remarked that the success of the terrorists was, perhaps in part, the result of a failure of coordination among the various U.S. Government agencies that are responsible for the nation's security, and that the process needed to be significantly reformed or strengthened.<sup>1</sup> Now, several years after the events of 9/11, this issue remains pertinent. The successful prosecution of the Global War on Terrorism depends largely on the interagency process.

The use of the term "the interagency process" is code among Washington insiders for the process by which national security policy issues are identified and through which this policy is formulated and executed at the direction of the President of the United States or for less critical issues, by senior government officials at the cabinet or subcabinet level. Pace's lament is just one of many that senior military and civilian officials have voiced for several years regarding the ineffectiveness of this process. In response, various proposals have been advanced for enhancing the process, but no proposal has been sufficient. Nonetheless, the view persists that there is a correct solution that will lead to a more rational process, it just has not been found.

Scholars who have studied the interagency process have tended to examine it at the highest level, that is, the National Security Council (NSC) level, focusing primarily on the presidential decisionmaking level. They have contributed to our understanding of the behavior of bureaucrats as well as offering models for understanding how national security decisionmaking occurs. Yet, examining the national security process at the pinnacle of the organizational structure, as well as the use of case studies to build models usually based on international crises, does not provide practitioners, as well as scholars, with a theory of how the interagency process operates. Additionally, gaining access to the inner most thoughts of individual decisionmakers during crises is difficult to accomplish.

The purpose of this chapter is to lay out a theory of how the interagency process works and, by positing that theory, explain why it is impossible to change the process to a degree that will satisfy senior leaders who believe that there is a solution that will guarantee better coordination, information sharing, and policy outputs. We do not argue for structural changes, the most often suggested panacea, but instead suggest that the existence of such a solution is a chimera. Instead, we contend that economic principles, specifically game theory, provide a useful means for understanding the process, for explaining why structural solutions will not work, and for illustrating the difficulties inherent in reforming the national security policymaking process.

## **NATIONAL SECURITY POLICYMAKING PROCESS**

The process by which the U.S. Government formulates and implements its national security policy does not differ significantly from how it creates policy

in other areas. Those differences that do exist are more related to the cross-jurisdictional nature of national security policymaking than any other factors. Further, the generic models for describing how policy is made are sufficient for the national security environment.

This policymaking process is taking place within a decisionmaking structure known commonly as the interagency process or more accurately known as the National Security Council system. This system had its origins 60 years ago.

### **The Components of the NSC System.**

The National Security Act of 1947 and its amendment in 1949 created an organization of the Executive Branch for national security matters. The Act created the NSC. The statutory members of the NSC are the President, Vice President, Secretary of State, and Secretary of Defense. The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff is the statutory military advisor to the Council, and the Director of National Intelligence is the intelligence advisor. The President heads the Council.<sup>2</sup> Other heads of departments and agencies, as well as other senior administration officials, often have been invited by Presidents to attend Council meetings or to serve as *de facto* members.<sup>3</sup>

The Council is the President's primary forum for considering the most vital national security issues confronting the nation. These issues are complex and often of the utmost secrecy. During a crisis, decisions may need to be made quickly without complete information and under severe stress. The lack of information can result from several arenas. NSC actors may not want to share information, may discover information exclusively, or may act on information different from

the other actors. Conversely, individuals under stress may not be able to acquire, absorb, analyze, or act on information or other actions. In other instances, the issues to be decided are less time sensitive and the pace by which these issues are examined may have taken months before being presented to the President.<sup>4</sup>

Each President has used the NSC in the manner that best served his interests and style. Presidents rely on certain institutions and individuals that they can trust and listen to their advice. President Dwight D. Eisenhower used the Council as a forum for obtaining advice on national security issues. President John F. Kennedy relied more heavily on informal groupings of advisors rather than the institutionalized processes of the NSC system.<sup>5</sup> During a crisis, the tendency is to use these small groups on an ad hoc basis. On these occasions, decisions “rise to the top.”<sup>6</sup> Relatively few policymakers participate in the process, including not only the statutory members of the NSC, but other close policy advisors.

The second component of the NSC system is the nominal integrator, the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs, often called the National Security Advisor (NSA). This position, however, is not a member of the Council. Eisenhower created it in 1953 to be the executive officer of the Council responsible for setting the longer-term policy agenda, furnishing the President’s perspective on issues, informing the President of Council matters, and supervising the NSC staff; but it was not envisioned to be a policy advisor.<sup>7</sup> It was not until Kennedy’s administration that the position assumed its present form as the President’s personal advisor on national security affairs.

Each President since then has allowed the NSA to serve in various capacities, but four roles are generally

defined. The first is acting as an “honest broker” in the policymaking process. In this capacity, the NSA is responsible for presenting the President with options, laying out the advantages and disadvantages, and accurately portraying the positions of the NSC principals.<sup>8</sup>

A second role is that of providing advice to the President, unencumbered by the views of the various bureaucratic constituencies that are involved in national security matters; and, depending on the President, leading policy formulation.<sup>9</sup> A third role is monitoring the actions of the national security apparatus to insure that the President’s directives are executed faithfully.<sup>10</sup> The fourth role has been as crisis manager. This official’s proximity to the President allows for swift and coordinated action under Presidential control.<sup>11</sup>

When the Congress established the Council, it also authorized a small staff headed by an Executive Secretary appointed by the President. Eisenhower increased its size substantially for two purposes: coordinating policy development and overseeing its implementation. He also introduced an elaborate number of committees to perform these two functions. Again, each President has fashioned the NSC staff in such a manner as to serve his personal ends and style. Nonetheless, its roles remain relatively unchanged, policy integration, and, if necessary, formulation; preparing issues for presidential decision; and monitoring policy execution.<sup>12</sup>

The final component of the system is the interagency committee system. These committees, which will be discussed in greater detail, are composed of representatives of the various national security departments and agencies.

## **The NSC System Explored.**

Thus, national security policymaking takes place within this structure, which is hierarchical and cross-jurisdictional given the nature of national security policy, and which cannot be the purview of a single agency because of the complexity involved. Below the NSC are three levels of interagency committees responsible for the formulation and execution of national security policy.

The most senior of these committees has been known since the administration of President George H. W. Bush as the Principals Committee. The Principals Committee is the senior interagency forum for the deliberation of national security policy issues. Its composition may differ in each administration, but it is comprised of cabinet level officers as well as other senior White House officials. It invariably has included the two prominent members of the National Security Council, the Secretaries of Defense and State, and the NSA, who chairs the committee. Other senior officials have included the Secretary of Treasury, the Chief of Staff to the President, the Director for Central Intelligence, and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, among others. With the exception of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, all the members of the Principals Committee are high-ranking political appointees.

The next level down is the Deputies Committee, which serves as the senior subcabinet interagency group responsible for examining national security policy issues. As the title of the committee suggests, this committee is composed of the deputies to the principals mentioned above. It is the hinge in the NSC system. Its functions are twofold: to present policy issues to the Principals for their consideration, and

to prescribe and review the work of the next lower interagency committees.

This lowest significant level, the name for which has often changed with each administration, sometimes known as committees and other times as interagency working groups, is designed to serve as the day-to-day focal points for interagency formulation, coordination, and implementation of national security policy. These committees provide the policy analysis for consideration by the more senior committees and thus provide the core competencies needed to devise policy. In essence, this level is where policy analysis is conducted. These groups are also responsible for ensuring timely responses to the actions directed by these senior committees as well as the President. The committees usually have geographic and functional responsibilities. The former remain somewhat fixed over administrations, such as regional committees (e.g., Europe or Asia), but the functional committees or groups often differ markedly, and their focus is largely indicative of the national security priorities of the President, the NSA, and other senior officials involved in national security policymaking, particularly the Secretaries of Defense and State. These committees or groups are composed of representatives of the organizations that are represented in the Deputies Committees, but who chairs them and at what level is not consistent between administrations. The current administration has directed through National Security Presidential Directive 1, "Organization of the National Security System," that the Policy Coordination Committees, the name for this level, be chaired by an official of under secretary or assistant secretary rank.<sup>13</sup> This direction is at a much higher level than ordinarily is the case and therefore, one could assume that the



administration is interested in political appointees controlling the process rather than career bureaucrats. Nonetheless, the process cannot be insulated entirely from the various bureaucracies involved for a number of reasons. The most important one is expertise. These committees are reliant to some degree or another on the technical knowledge of the bureaucracies.

### **Characteristics of the Interagency Process.**

As the term "National Security Council System" implies, the policymaking process for national security creates an environment that has a number of characteristics that can lubricate or impede the formulation and implementation of policy. First, as indicated earlier, the process is complex, that is, several organizations are involved in the process, each with its own organizational missions and cultures. In addition to the institutions involved, numerous participants take part in the meetings of the various forums as well as personnel who prepare them for the meetings. Coalitions of individuals form and disband as the process unfolds. Additionally, the structure has three or more levels, which underscores the difficulty inherent in policy formulation, coordination, and implementation. Further, this complexity transcends the U.S. Government structure since national security issues have domestic and international consequences.

Second, although there is a formal structure as described previously, this process is not immune from informal organizational dynamics. Some participants in the process have stated that the pace of activity associated with the conduct of business differs dramatically. Unofficial business normally occurs quickly, while the formal structure of decisionmaking

moves relatively slowly. This is not a surprising conclusion since the formal structure was expressly created to be deliberative. Moreover, the slow pace of the decisionmaking results from the often competing interests of the organizations and individuals involved in the process as well as the lack of familiarity that participants in the formal structure might have with one another, which may inhibit interaction as well as speed. One should not discount another factor, that is, the conditions under which a decision is occurring. If the participants are involved in a reappraisal of existing policy or the development of new policy, then it is likely that they will be very deliberate in their actions, searching for bureaucratic "landmines," particularly if there are a large number of actors in the process, and not driven particularly by time constraints. In a crisis situation, the pace of the process may change significantly, as the government cannot afford to be paralyzed by inaction. Thus the conduct of business occurs rapidly with the direction sometimes being top-down driven, as opposed to the standard process of bottom-up formulation, and fewer actors actually are involved in the process since having too many actors actually hampers decisionmaking. Although in both cases consensus may be an objective, the constraints of time drive the process.

A third characteristic of the process is the fragmentation of power. Power is distributed among various actors with varying degrees of capability. Neither individual actors nor any group has the power to control the outcome with any certainty. Again, not only does the formal structure provide power to some of the players, but there is also a network of interactive subsystems involved that have their own sources of power. These sources may be based on expertise,

influence, information or power derived from others, such as speaking in the name of a powerful player within the system, or deriving power from external sources, such as the Congress or interest groups that hold sway with the administration.

This leads to a fourth attribute: the multiple influences that impinge upon the process. These influences are internal and external, and they create a myriad of dynamics that are often difficult to detect, let alone diagnose. The policymaking environment or events shape perceptions, reactions, and flows of information that can color debate and ultimately, decisions.

A fifth feature related to the rationale for the existence of the NSC system itself is the desire for an interdisciplinary thrust to policymaking. National security policymaking requires an integrated set of specialized knowledge and skills since no one organization or individual has the technical expertise, information, resources, or even influence to control the process.

Sixth, the process is political in the most widely understood definition of that term. Not only are a number of political actors, i.e., appointees, involved in this process, but the process takes place in the political arena of the executive branch and, as described previously, is heavily influenced by external political actors. Further, bureaucrats are political actors with related, but sometimes independent or contradictory agendas and objectives.

The process by which decisions are reached is also a characteristic because of the cross-jurisdictional nature of the policy area. The process has been described as consensual and thus is guided by compromise. A majority may articulate a policy, but opposing views

are taken into account and are often necessary for success. Thus, collaboration is essential to the creation of feasible policy and its implementation. In a crisis situation particularly, an informal policy consensus will exist across agencies but even in these times, teamwork and unity is vulnerable to anxiety about political risks, bureaucratic equities, and personal relationships. Nevertheless, it is a rare political animal who can afford to alienate other participants, and if this occurs, then the viability of that person in the process is diminished. Revenge can be a potent variable in the process.

Seventh, the process involves discretion. Those charged with execution of the policy are often allowed broad powers to implement for a number of reasons, but largely resulting from the often broad direction given by the President or the senior level committees, the Principals, or Deputies.

### **Running the Process: Wisely and Well.**

Former National Security Advisor Brent Scowcroft is attributed with the statement that achieving success in the national security policymaking process involves the participants being able to “do it wisely and do it well.” Doing it wisely suggests that the participants must be able to make consistently sound decisions on a variety of issues over time and when often confronted with uncertainty, time limitations, and questionably reliable information. Doing it well connotes the ability to integrate the national instruments of policy—diplomatic, military, economic, and informational—or related functions such as humanitarian support in such a manner as to address the various dimensions of policy development and execution. It may also

mean the ability to formulate U.S. national security policy and win its acceptance by foreign governments, to include mobilizing the international community to respond successfully to a policy issue by acting in harmony with the United States through a coalition of interest and maintaining a long-term commitment.

The policymaking process has already been discussed generically, but to it must be added two other components. These are instruments and information, alluded to earlier in the chapter. The former refers to the policy instruments available to leaders as well as the strategies needed to use these instruments. The latter refers to information, derived from the intelligence community or elsewhere, which will enlighten the policymakers as they deliberate. This information must be collected and analyzed for reliability. In crises, these twin notions of wisdom and competency mean that policymakers must deal with numerous considerations that result in policy and, depending on the circumstances, mission success.

### **Guaranteeing Success.**

In a process as complex as this one, success is highly dependent on effective collaboration and performance at the interagency working level. The people working at this level would have, ideally, three important attributes needed for developing and executing policy successfully. First, they must be comfortable working in a conceptual environment. They must be able to share an understanding of goals and priorities and be able to expand the aperture of their understanding beyond their own functional skills. Further, they must have the capacity to make broad assessment of the situation and the potential responses. They must be comfortable with

ambiguity and with gaps in information. They must be mindful of time and set realistic goals within that constraint. Additionally, they need to be able to clarify the values in trade-offs between possible options.

The next attribute relates to the ability to achieve consensus. They must be malleable enough to agree to an effective process for examining the issues and coming to a decision; that is, be willing to debate, but also be willing to accede. They have to forsake their organizational identity at times to forge a consensus approach for action.

Finally, they must be mindful of group dynamics and have the stamina to contend with a pace that can be grueling at times, particularly during a crisis. They must be able to recognize emerging problems and see the consequences in a number of dimensions: political, public opinion, etc. They must always be flexible.

These are the ideal attributes the members would have for successful collaboration and performance. The reality is substantially different because of a number of factors ranging from self-interest to organizational loyalty. Group success contends with individual success. Sometimes the objectives of both components are consistent. Sometimes they are not. Further, not all agencies are created equal. Even if the group members have the best intentions, they may not be able to deliver on their promises for a number of reasons. They may be overruled by their superiors, who have their own agenda, or the organization of which they are a member may not have the resources available to fulfill the agreement. Thus, the person chairing the group must consider these factors in managing the process. She must also continually raise her political antenna and recognize the needs of her superiors in the superior committees. Their needs are essentially threefold: cognitive, political, and psychological.

The cognitive need is for basic knowledge about the situation, actors, and other dynamics occurring in the policy formulation environment as well as the external environment. The political need refers to the policymaker's need to understand the political risks, to minimize those risks, and to be able to communicate the value of the effort being undertaken by one's subordinates. The psychological need refers to dealing with the uncertainty and complexity of the process, which rises significantly if a crisis is involved. Considering those concerns, policymakers want flexibility above all else and a range of realistic options that are politically acceptable and minimize the risk of failure, which is the reason why the conduct of official business often moves slowly. Against this runs the need for a rational process that ensures that the options are feasible and that risk is distributed equitably among the actors involved in the policymaking process. It is for this reason that policymakers and those who support them look for a plan or strategy for integrating the diverse elements at all levels that are involved in creating and implementing national security policy. They are looking for a rational approach that will ensure a comprehensive assessment of the situation, promote coordination through established mechanisms, clarify agency responsibilities and priorities, forge consensus on the means and ends, identify the essential issues that require the principals and deputies to decide as well as unresolved bureaucratic disputes and resource shortfalls, and promote accountability.

The U.S. Government's experience in peace operations in the mid-1990s provided impetus for a search to attain a rational approach, particularly among the U.S. military who found the process unwieldy and cumbersome. The failure of the 1993 Somalia mission,

and in particular the difficulty involved in coordinating and executing the 1994 Haiti peacekeeping mission, were the specific catalysts for this attempt to find an answer. The prime mover in this process was the Department of Defense (DoD).

## **RATIONALIZING THE PROCESS**

U.S. peace operations in Somalia and Haiti, while not crises, were substantial operations. The former created a political calamity for the Clinton administration when 18 U.S. soldiers were killed in Mogadishu in October 1993. After action reviews indicated that numerous operational problems in the field might have been remedied by adequate interagency coordination and planning in Washington, particularly before November 1993, when a committee was eventually established to ensure high-level interagency coordination.<sup>14</sup> The latter demonstrated the difficulty inherent in complex contingency operations that include such elements as security, economic development, and humanitarian assistance.<sup>15</sup> The result of these analyses was a presidential directive, Presidential Decision Directive-56, signed by President William J. Clinton in May 1997, which provided authoritative direction on how the interagency would coordinate and plan for complex operations.

In 1999, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff requested that the Institute of National Strategic Studies (INSS) at the National Defense University study the implementation of PDD-56, as it was the military leadership's view that this directive, which it had urged be developed as a framework for achieving interagency coordination and planning, had not been accepted by a number of agencies. The study produced



by INSS concluded, based on case studies, that there was a correlation between the quality of interagency coordination in Washington and the effectiveness of U.S. efforts in the field. However, in the 2 years since the PDD had been issued, it had not been implemented as intended, and it had not been accepted across the interagency, including acceptance by senior officials.<sup>16</sup> In response, a few initiatives designed to overcome the problems highlighted in the study were implemented during the remainder of the Clinton administration's tenure but were not successful because support at the cabinet level did not exist. PDD-56 was essentially shelved after George W. Bush entered the White House since some senior administration officials had an aversion to U.S. participation in the types of operations that the directive was designed to address.

### **Rearranging the Pieces.**

As the new century began, political scientists, some of whom had substantial experience in government as NSC staff members or other related positions, and some practitioners who had served in senior positions, offered their views on how to improve the NSC system to produce better national security policy by improving interagency coordination.<sup>17</sup> Such proposals were not new. Noted scholars and practitioners have expressed concerns about governance in the national security arena for decades.<sup>18</sup> The common element that these proposals have is that they focus largely on the role of the NSA and the NSC staff. (In one case the recommendation is to abolish the NSC and replace it with an executive committee of the cabinet.<sup>19</sup>) In short, there has been no dearth of recommended modifications to the organizational structure of the

NSC staff or bromides offered about the role that the NSA should have in the process. In the discussion of how the NSC system could be made more effective, the solution is usually seen as an organizational issue. In making this claim, the scholars often fail to return to the models of American foreign policy decisionmaking that have served them well since the 1970s.<sup>20</sup> Examining the models is instructive in that no one model explains national security policy decisionmaking. In fact, what the plurality of models highlight is the complexity involved in the decisionmaking process. Simply modifying organizational structures or urging the NSA to act in a particular manner cannot overcome such complexity.

Public and business administration experts who study organizational dynamics and behavior suggest that reorganizing is not a panacea and is often self-defeating. Scholarly literature abounds with examples. As David Tucker points out, organizational culture accounts for some of the difficulty as well as hierarchy, bias, misperceptions, and unique perspectives.<sup>21</sup> Add to that mix personal agendas, and you have a brew that makes interagency coordination so difficult that no level of exhortation by a senior level leader or interagency training and rehearsal can overcome it.

William Newmann has indicated that the various decisionmaking models are valuable since they depict competing forces within a presidential administration, describing different perspectives that clash unceasingly. Structure and processes, in part, explain an administration's decisionmaking process. All administrations commence with a similar decisionmaking structure of hierarchically connected interagency committees working under the NSC.<sup>22</sup> Dissatisfaction with this structure and its related

processes leads presidents to abandon temporarily or permanently adjust these structures at certain points of the policy process to achieve policy outputs consistent with their strategic aims. If that is the case, then further effort should not be put into enhancing interagency coordination by reorganizing structure or changing processes since very little is gained. When there is a crisis or when the president wants a specific policy outcome, top-down decisionmaking is in play.

Instead, attention must be paid to another aspect then, the “alliances, coalitions, disagreements, and rivalries between organizations, officials, and the president in general and on any given issue.”<sup>23</sup> This aspect is worthy of additional analysis.

## **CHOICE, BARGAINING, AND TRANSACTIONS**

Understanding alliances, coalitions, and rivalries is critical to comprehending the nature of policymaking. The personalities and the personal styles of the persons involved in the process are important, but so are their political calculations. Thus, we turn to economic theory, especially game theory, to attain an appreciation of how policy is made and how this process serves presidents.

All decisionmakers have a constant need for information to optimize their decisionmaking. As Andrew Rudalevige indicates, *where* policy is formulated is important for it has an effect on the information the president receives.<sup>24</sup> There are two sources of information. The first is the departments and agencies of the executive branch, which, as noted previously, have substantial technical expertise and sizable resources that can be dedicated to information gathering. The president will also rely on the White

House staff, the NSC staff in particular. The NSC staff consists not only of political appointees, who often are knowledgeable academic and political experts, but also persons assigned to the White House by the departments and agencies. These assigned individuals become presidential loyalists by virtue of where they operate and to whom they are answerable. As Leslie Gelb has noted, "I have generally found that staffers from the Department of State or Defense or the Central Intelligence Agency behave very differently if they are moved to the White House. They are far more conscious of Presidential stakes and interests."<sup>25</sup> This convergence and the diversity of expertise are valuable to presidents. It would be inaccurate to assume, however, that institutions matter more than individuals. Individuals serve an institution (this is truer for the bureaucracy than the White House staff since the staff does not serve the presidency as an institution, but the president as an individual) and assume the norms and objectives of that organization, but they still behave as individuals. This is not to dismiss the importance of organizations, but it does suggest that if the focus is on organizing to obtain greater effectiveness, it will not succeed, because the president cannot control all the actors in the process. The president can be reasonably assured that the NSC staff is trustworthy and shares his goals, but he cannot control them in their entirety, as the Tower Commission underscores in its report on the Iran/Contra affair. He certainly is not in control of the individuals who constitute the bureaucracies. Although there are organizational cultures and loyalties operative here, the bureaucracy is not monolithic either. Thus, the multitude of actors in the process have different motivations and are making calculations based on cost and benefits to be derived, such as time, effort, effect

on reputation, success, advancement, and even the avoidance of criticism from constituencies, interest groups, and the Congress. These calculations influence how they bargain in the interagency policymaking process. In other words, "individual behavior is strongly conditioned by that individual's strategic interaction with her institutional environment, because the environment affects the costs and benefits—the constraints and incentives—associated with a given course of action."<sup>26</sup> The participants seek to maximize the benefits or payoffs and minimize the costs of interacting within the interagency environment in which national security policy is forged. To counteract this tendency, presidents and their loyal staff attempt to centralize power in the NSC staff and make it more effective, competent, and responsive to the needs of the chief executive. The NSC staff members are agents of the president. Their interests are consistent with the reformers whose proposals seek to reconfigure the NSC staff because it is the only institution that a president can realistically control, though they are optimistic that in doing so, they can control the bureaucracy. They are also adherents of the belief that the end of government is to serve the president and his interests. Thus, the president has two interests in this process: policy should reflect his preferences; and the outcome must be successful with the Congress or the public. Thus, while we talk about a president's policy, policy is truly the accretion of individual proposals, each representing a series of transactions between the president or his agents and other actors in the policy formulation process. These transactions that create a policy occur in different policy environments, or marketplaces, and consist of different actors (buyers and sellers). In other words, these environments

change from policy issue to policy issue, and the costs of the transactions differ significantly at each event. The currency of these transactions differs as well. It may be information or it may be support; information or support needed to formulate policy that solves a problem, while remaining politically viable. The policy is a "good," a commodity, and comes with a cost. Bureaucrats instinctively understand how to price their product to achieve their need no matter how that need is measured.

### **Game Theory and the Interagency.**

An interagency actor, in many respects, needs to be an expert in his or her respective field. Yet, he or she must be able to overcome a series of challenges ranging from bureaucratic politics to interpersonal idiosyncrasies. As stated previously, no single model of approaching the complex interagency world can incorporate all possible situations that an interagency actor faces everyday. However, one particular branch of social science thought, game theory, might provide a framework to think about situations similar to those in the interagency. Although not all inclusive in explaining interagency actions, many aspects of using a game theoretic approach can provide a wider view towards understanding problems and eventually improving interagency cooperation. Game theory and ideas about the use of information can help explain why actors take particular positions or actions.

Game theory is a field of economics that examines the interaction between individuals who possess differing information levels. Information is knowledge that players use to make decisions and take appropriate measures whether against another actor or in response

to the environment. Game theory can help individuals evaluate and deal with interagency problems by explaining actions due to information that a player has in his or her exclusive possession.<sup>27</sup> This information may come about due to interaction between individuals or as a result of nature.

In daily situations, players react to other players' actions and choices that in turn affect how they operate in a "game." For example, in the game of chess, opposing players observe directly the positions and movements on the playing board. Information, but not intent, is available openly to the opposing player. An actor could anticipate permutations of all possible moves and predict outcomes; however, depending on the situation, this sophisticated level of analysis may be difficult to accomplish. If this simple analogy were representative of all situations, then we could end this discussion with exploring ways to swiftly calculate the most likely chess move by using a computer. However, what if one person plays chess while another selects the Chinese game similar to chess called "Go"? Conflicting rules, motivations, playing pieces, and other dissimilarities would obscure your impression of your opponent's objectives.

A more complex problem involves situations where incomplete or no information is shared among players. A game of chance, such as poker, provides an excellent case. In five-card draw, players can keep some or all of their cards. A player may attain some information about an opposing hand, but he or she only has a partial picture of an opponent's cards. On the other hand, in seven-card stud, depending on what version one plays, no cards are revealed. This leaves players with a heavy burden to decide whether to fold their cards or continue play. A player can still win the

game with a hand by bluffing or by manipulating an opponent's lack of information about his hand.

The interagency process includes many situations similar to playing the game of poker. There are "players" or actors with certain objectives. A player's resources, as well as opponent actions and objectives, drive the options or "strategies" the player will use to achieve his or her goals. The achievement of these objectives is defined by "payoffs" or rewards that players receive after completion of the game. Most importantly, there is the added aspect of information. The nature of the game may preclude revelation of any information during the encounter or only partial information, or information exposed only after a decision is made. Many times a player might have insight into some information because of his or her position, but may also be duped by false information or players trying to disavow certain positions on purpose.<sup>28</sup> Further, events in the real world are constantly changing and that affects the validity or control of information. Actors within the interagency process deal with many of the aforementioned situations.

Actors in the interagency process could benefit greatly with a basic understanding of game theory, especially those who might be involved in the process. One may not totally understand the strategies and payoffs, or attain particular information that can influence an actor's behavior, but an understanding of the particular game conditions can help someone devise methods to better cope with this situation. These actors could improve conditions for decisionmaking that produce more effective and efficient policy.



## **Information: The Basis of Games.**

Game theory helps explain many situations where information possession and usage differ among actors. An appropriate game theoretic approach that characterizes the interagency process realistically concerns actors who do not or cannot share information among other actors. This would introduce many opportunities where individuals hold an asymmetric information advantage over rival actors that vie for particular policy decisions. Coupled with personalities and dynamic crisis situations, the mixture of these conditions can create solutions that are suboptimal at best and contradictory to national security interest at worst.

Although game theoretic approaches may seem common sense, the framework to think through a problem is the key. Many interagency observers expect individual actors to process information using “rational” means that can translate clearly from a problem statement to a logical solution. That is, trying to “maximize” a return or “minimize” a cost. If true, then our interagency process would seem like a smooth, seamless running machine. Unfortunately, this is not the case. Approaches to analyzing the reasons why decisionmakers reach seemingly “irrational” solutions include cognitive, organizational, traditional, or historical motivations. Individuals also make decisions that appear “rational,” given the asymmetry of information.

An example that an interagency observer can use to explain conditions involves one aspect of game theory. An interesting game theory consideration is the principal-agent approach. This may explain decisions based on how much information each actor is

endowed with by an event or through activities that he or she performs in his or her organization. Individuals in the national security decisionmaking arena fit into two categories. In the NSC system, the President or NSA might be thought of as the principal. A principal normally has a much broader range of information than subordinate agents, but that information usually does not have the depth of the agents' knowledge. The principal therefore uses his or her leadership position that controls the agents by selecting them to take an action based on some criteria. In the case of the President or the NSA, these agents are members of the NSC staff. Other actors, such as bureaucrats in the departments and agencies, are agents who also operate under the purview of the principal, but sometimes only nominally. These agents control finer grades of information than the principal. In most cases, these agents hold an informational advantage over the principal and, in many cases, other agents, such as the NSC staff.

These considerations allow for a series of possible confrontations that can affect policy decisions that affect subsequent operations where the principal directs the agent to implement a particular decision. For example, a principal can use agents to develop policy options for a body, such as the NSC or Principals Committee, to consider. Suppose an agent has appropriate information about a national security issue, but if a particular option is selected, it may reveal inadequacies about that agent's organization. The agent could hide the information since others may not have this knowledge or may not observe actions that would reflect this resource. Given that some agents have selective information that others may not possess, an actor can take actions that are to the detriment to the nation, or the principal can select the

wrong agent's option leading to a suboptimal policy decision.

Principal-agent models are usually explained in terms of traditional commercial contracts. The parties agree to a contract where an agent fulfills certain conditions for the principal. If the agent has certain information or knowledge that the principal does not possess, then the agent could still fulfill the contract's requirements; but the principal could have received better results if he had all the information. An agent could have improved his or her performance through better effort or by taking actions that could increase efficiency or effectiveness. Like commercial contracts, the NSC system could improve its decisionmaking efficiency and effectiveness if information were more symmetrical in its possession among all members.

Principals and agents who are mutually aware of relevant information can improve national security decisionmaking. Although a game theoretic approach does not explain all issues, it does provide insights into how to think about interagency problems. A first step in improving this situation is becoming aware of the possible impact of principal-agent relations. For example, if the Principals Committee is, in many cases, the pinnacle of decisions, can one view subordinate committee levels as agents that also operate under similar principal-agent conditions? This would affect how one views and interprets decisions and actions conducted by lower level committees. Second, the relationship between principals and agents can create behavior that is contrary to the desires of a principal. Third, the President, NSA, and other strategic leaders could attempt to force their agents to reveal more information. Some agents might have information before a decision is made, while at other times they

gain advantage with information revealed to them after a decision is made. The interagency process could implement several initiatives to improve information revelation.

### **National Security Decisionmaking as a Principal-Agent Hierarchy.**

One might view the national security decision-making apparatus as a series of principals and agents. This apparatus runs on a hierarchy of authority that deals with higher-level policy issues at increasing levels of decisionmaking. The NSC system lends itself to dependence on subordinate groups. Each succeeding committee level relies on options, analyses, and actions from subordinate groups. The agents from these subordinate groups have specific information that the superior organization might not have or be aware that it exists.

Organizations can transition from a principal to an agent once decisions are made and higher-level organizations use the subordinate committees. The problem is compounded because the time required for a decision may diminish, the policy issue may broaden, bringing several principal-agent interactions into play, and the stakes may become higher as decisions move their way up to the President. Information might become more compartmentalized, harder to integrate, and possible options narrowed as policy issues advance. Intradepartmental organizations frequently involve informational asymmetries, and those in charge deal with principal-agent types of problems daily. Getting the suborganizations to cooperate is difficult due to "turf" wars that affect budget, missions, egos, and in some cases differences in professional judgment.

However, the secretary of a department or agency head can extend his or her authority to force release of information or change agents. The problem is more difficult in interdepartmental dealings.

Interagency committees do not necessarily have a single source of authority, but may only have an integrator as their nominal leader or may have an ad hoc chairperson depending on the situation. Additionally, the committee may focus on a very broad range of issues rather than a narrower and commonly agreed-upon set of concerns that a department may have. This condition results in a more complex problem to solve within the interagency. Access to information is limited not only within the immediate interagency committee structure, but if detailed information is required, then it will need to cross departmental boundaries. It may even require confronting reluctant subordinate interagency committees that resist releasing information to provide it.

The challenge facing interagency committees becomes how to address the information asymmetries. Some of these issues are difficult to solve. For example, restricted intelligence data or analysis may create conflict over who can receive particular information. If information is released, then the question of interpretation and analysis is also relevant. The question about information becomes more masked when experts in the application of particular instruments of national power, such as military or economic power, hold most or the only expertise in the interagency group. Unlike the typical principal-agent relationship where most of the actors have at least a common understanding of the basic conditions that affect a problem, today's focus on agents with information that may be mutually exclusive can create

even more separation among agents. Representatives from DoD, the State Department, and the Commerce Department may share basic understanding about the issue. However, DoD representatives may have an insurmountable information asymmetry advantage regarding military power, but may have only a faint inkling of diplomatic capabilities or limitations facing the State Department. This characteristic is radically different from a typical contract where individuals compete for a production contract. Agents vying for a contract to build a skyscraper have a broad common information background because they are all construction firms and they may have observed their competitors in action or belong to a common agents' group, like a local construction industry association.

Nonetheless, the NSC system's hierarchical arrangement is consistent with the principal-agent model. However, harsher divisions among holders of information, more and complex principal-agent relations, and other issues create many problems and behaviors that are different from the private sector environment and can be detrimental to the selection of an appropriate solution.

### **Moral Hazard and Adverse Selection Problems.**

Information asymmetries create other unhealthy situations. Two situations that are relevant to the interagency are moral hazard and adverse selection. Moral hazard conditions involve agents acting in ways that are unobservable to the principal. In these cases, the agent has some information that he or she receives or that he or she can control to which the principal does not have access. This control of information influences choices made by the agent that may be contrary to

the principal's best interest. For example, suppose an agency knows that a policy decision will greatly expand its mission. That agency could bank on this expansion, with subsequent budget authority, and start acquiring systems and increasing personnel to work in areas that are indirectly related to the approved, expanded mission areas. Unless this information is uncovered, the agency could act in ways contrary to the original intent. Conversely, in an adverse selection situation, principals cannot discern the viability of the options that the various agents offer. Adverse selection occurs when a principal picks the wrong agent. An agency could present proposals or options that promise more or less than they can possibly deliver. Unfortunately, if that agency controls information or expertise that others cannot use, they could present alternatives that seem viable and better than more realistic alternatives. The principal might not be able to compare fairly all of the relevant options and thus might select a questionable agent.

Moral hazard conditions often occur in the interagency. Suppose during a decisionmaking committee meeting, interagency actors wrestle with a policy review of ongoing operations in a foreign country. The lead agency for the policy has the advantage of controlling a number of resources to include not only funding, but also personnel in the country that may affect contact and cooperation with foreign officials. Could the lead agency, with an informational advantage regarding conditions of the foreign nation, and an operational advantage of how it applies the resources, skew the policy formulation process? Instead of integrating all elements of national power, the agency might take actions that either strengthen its particular view of how to solve the

problem or create conditions that make other options less acceptable. The agent could take “hidden actions” that are not apparent to others because he possesses “hidden knowledge.” Additionally, agents may become less concerned about the impact of their actions; agents can act independently since they can mask information regarding the action from the principal. Similarly, since an agent’s ability to assume risk, given its support by the entire interagency, may be reduced, he or she could also become emboldened to take more aggressive action. Suppose in the interagency, agreements are made to accept an option that uses military, economic, and diplomatic instruments. Diplomats may take more uncompromising positions in negotiations with other parties since military forces support them. These diplomats, given selected information that is not available to other agents, may compound the problem.

In many foreign policy issues, a nation might request aid (material, technological, and financial) from the U.S. Government, United Nations (UN), or non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Agents within the U.S. Government responsible for administering this aid might have a vested interest in supporting these nations since doing so provides an enhanced role and mission for the agents, greater budget authority, and status among other players in the region. However, some foreign aid recipients might not have the ability or motivation to properly account for foreign aid funds or rightly use resources. Some foreign leaders might divert funding from its intended purposes to more nefarious ones, namely into undisclosed private bank or terrorist accounts. Similarly, the release of critical technologies that have dual military and civilian use could be a boon or dilemma for different agents. Suppose, under



the Missile Technology Control Regime, that a nation requests purchase of microprocessors designed for nano-technology applications, but found to be in use for ballistic missiles. Representatives from the State Department might want to encourage the sale to cement foreign relations with the nation. Likewise, the Commerce Department might do so to ensure jobs and business are maintained rather than lost to a foreign competitor. Conversely, DoD may object for national security reasons. Depending on the decision to sell or not to sell the microprocessor, the agent could ignore reporting behavior for moral hazard reasons. The U.S. Government agents, if they know about the fraud or misuse of resources, face a moral hazard decision. If they report the fraud, then this may threaten future operations that could diminish their status within the interagency and the region. Conversely, if they do not report the problem to the NSC, then the program may continue unabated unless another party observes the issue. Moral hazard situations provide perverse situations for the agents, and major challenges for the principal to confront.

The interagency process also may shield certain agents and this in turn creates a problem of adverse selection. An agent knows his or her ability to accept certain risks or the shortcomings of his or her abilities. If the agent does not identify these shortcomings or the principal cannot identify them, then the principal could select the wrong option or agent to take action. If the principal cannot tell who among interagency participants can adequately accomplish a task, then the principal might select the wrong agent or delay a decision.<sup>29</sup> An agent might have different payoffs and motivations from other agents. Unless an agent that has the requisite abilities to meet the principal's needs

is chosen, any solution becomes suspect of turning into a suboptimal one. Further, agents that propose options may not have an equal chance of success advocating their positions. With an agent's private information and no apparent mechanism to ascertain claims, the principal has difficulty determining who is the proper agent or identifying agents who might put forth equally weak options. This could drive out agents that have workable solutions since they do not want to be associated with an outcome that would either damage their reputations or end in a poor result.<sup>30</sup> Questionable agents might force out other reputable agents. In this case of adverse selection, we cannot tell what type of agent we have to consider. Only the agents know, with their own private information, and they may not want to reveal it to the principal.

During the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962, President Kennedy and his interagency Executive Committee (ExCom) decided to blockade the island through a quarantine to stop the importation of nuclear and conventional weapons by the Soviets. Since the U.S. Navy had the only practical means to conduct the quarantine, it could take potential actions that might not coincide with ExCom intent. The "details" of the blockade belonged to the Navy.<sup>31</sup> The Navy wanted to conduct, naturally, a military mission of conducting a blockade to include stopping vessels. The President and ExCom members wanted to send a message to Soviet leadership to negotiate the nuclear threat out of Cuba through delaying employment of weapons and allowing diplomatic efforts to prevail. The agent, the Chief of Naval Operations, did not intentionally mislead the President, but he took actions that were not in concert with the President's intended objectives. The members of ExCom were not aware of details of

the agent's options that could threaten an escalation of the crisis if the Navy had inadvertently attacked a ship to stop it from breaking the blockade.

The principal in the case of the interagency has a slight advantage over a private contract signatory. Information that is kept private may work while deliberations are made concerning policy options. However, during and after a policy option is executed, information may become more public. During the course of private contracts, an agent could hide information effectively from the principal. Suppose the agent is in the building construction industry. The agent could use faulty construction materials, poor quality labor, or improper architecture. Unless the principal hires an independent building inspector or gets a warranty, then the principal could suffer from a moral hazard or adverse selection situation.

The interagency differs from private concerns in several areas. First, interagency actors normally do not leave the policy action after a particular position is selected. In the skyscraper construction scenario, once a building contractor is selected, competing agents leave the market. In the interagency, agents often take part in the execution of the policy option advocated by a particular agent. Thus, information or observations about the policy's effectiveness or efficiency become more apparent. These agents become part in the "solution" or continue with the same standing interagency committee. The principal and the selected agent have, in some respects, an independent set of observers or critics to oversee or criticize selected actions. Second, private contract information may stay unseen for legal, public relations, or other concerns. Interagency actions often occur under the glare of public interest. The media, government oversight

organizations (e.g., Congress), international allies, and public advocacy groups can provide outside sources of information about the policy option outcome and review. Third, many principal-agent situations analyze conditions where discrete actions occur. An interagency policy action may be a portion of a larger consideration that may put constraints or additional oversight into the problem.

Despite these influences, interagency problems involving principal-agent situations are still present. Moral hazard and adverse selection conditions are prevalent in several situations such as early considerations of policy options. Circumstances arise where initial considerations of policy or highly classified and compartmentalized actions lead to situations where once a policy is selected, information is restricted to a single agent only. These conditions can create situations where the principle must incorporate considerations of information asymmetries into the interagency process. Not all decisions are made public, and the process of interagency policy formulation may go unnoticed until a final decision is made. The public eye is blinded to these activities until problems surface. Unknown conditions, facing a situation that the interagency has never seen, the highly segregated (by expertise and information) nature of government operations and organization, and other concerns put contemplation of the moral hazard and adverse selection process squarely in the interagency arena.

### **Revealing Information is the Key.**

If agents choose to reveal information that they possess during interagency deliberations or changing circumstances, the nation's national security decisions

would improve. Lack of information or unwarranted actions due to information asymmetry could create conditions where first-best solutions are bypassed for less effective policies. Unfortunately, the day of full disclosure of all information is difficult for many reasons. Given the possible problems of moral hazard and adverse selection, national security decisionmakers should design methods to encourage the proper information being released at the appropriate time.

The NSC could redesign how it organizes, rewards, or selects policy options. The key problem is how to extract certain information. This process becomes difficult given the multiple policy options considered, the ad hoc nature of some interagency groups, and other challenges. Some of our suggestions deal with how individuals react to certain actions or situations. These actions involve moral hazard. Other recommendations deal with how one might design the game to avoid adverse selection.

Individuals, in this case representatives of organizations in the interagency, choose to reveal or not information for a variety of reasons. Some of their reasons may be noble, while others less so. Agents could decide not to release certain information because they are risk-averse to potential poor outcomes. Risk-aversion, the degree of willingness to hazard losing a position or resource, may affect the selection of certain information shared among colleagues within the interagency.

Although difficult to combat, education and added emphasis on information sharing might help. For example, the armed services suffered difficulties in trying to create joint service options and actions for decades. Frequently, each service tried to advance its position to the exclusion of others or, when it was

to its advantage, in combination with others. This situation was highlighted by problems concerning the 1980 attempted rescue of hostages in Iran, and the 1983 combat operations in Grenada.<sup>32</sup> Duplicative and rival systems, programs, and activities created conditions where agents had motivation not to share information or cooperate with each other. Roles, missions, budgets, and institutional survival were at stake when policy decisions were discussed and made; much like agents face in the interagency. Poor military performance in Iran and Grenada and other serious concerns forced the Congress to pass the Goldwater-Nichols Act in 1986 that, arguably, ensured changes in organization, education, personnel, and operations to break “stovepipes” among the military services. This created the impetus to restructure the Joint Staff, combatant commands, and armed services to increase the sharing of information among organizations. Although not solving all joint activity issues, the seemingly impossible task of fusing divergent agents with differing levels of information was made possible. Perhaps the success of the Goldwater-Nichols Act was due to the limitation of the Act primarily to a single department, the common realization that the lack of cooperation and information among services was a serious matter, increased congressional oversight, or the nature of military personnel who implemented the law. However, the relative success of forced “jointness” is apparent and could be used as an example of improved interagency action. Hidebound service bureaucracies changed to improve action between one another. Individual actions were modified to create motivation to become more “joint” through forcing promotions, budgets, and increased control of activities to comply with the Goldwater-Nichols Act provisions.

In this case, incentives were introduced for agents to embrace cooperation and information sharing to make joint actions work.

Adverse selection solutions are more difficult to combat. Moral hazard situations occur when agents have varying degrees of information. Principals confront a different problem in an adverse selection situation. They deal with agents that have differing abilities, but do not tell the principal what type of agent they are relative to others. In this case, some agents may represent agencies that have a great capability to conduct actions successfully while others may not, but want the opportunity to do so. How can one determine whether we selected the effective agent?

The emphasis of solving the adverse selection problem revolves around determining if the agent selected has offered a proper policy option or is capable of conducting the option. The interagency could use an independent organization to review the agent's option or performance. This process is time consuming, but an independent review could discover how effective the agent appears in initial and any subsequent reviews throughout the process. In the commercial world, agents offer warranties or promises to guarantee their work. In the NSC interagency, agent commitment for cost and performance may be difficult to enforce due to the dynamic state of nature. The agent does have to work on a continual basis with the same set of agents and a principal for subsequent interagency business. Reputation and an agency's guarantee can mean everything when bureaucratic politics rely on the integrity of the agent. A small pool of agents with repeated interagency contact where agents know each other could help a principal put added social pressure to force revelation of information.

## CONCLUSION

The scope, complexity, and size of national security decision making have increased exponentially since the NSC's formation after World War II and the evolution of the NSC system. The range of diplomatic, economic, and military problems in the national security arena has increased since the Cold War. During the Cold War, the main focus was on the Soviet Union. Today, we face the problems of terrorism, drug smuggling, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, trade issues, and other concerns that demand better integration of the instruments of national power. These concerns have also placed more importance on the interagency process. The actions of the interagency actors have become key elements of planning and selecting policy options in the international and domestic arenas.

The NSC's basic foundation is set in law. Although administrations can change the emphasis and number of subordinate committees in this system or rearrange the structure of the NSC staff, one of the fundamental problems facing national security decisions is the diverse, sometimes contradictory, positions that competing agencies hold and take to the interagency. Much confusion about positions and motivations revolves around the sharing or possession of information among participants. Without a full accounting for positions, capabilities, threats, and other issues, a national security decisionmaker might not arrive at an optimal solution. Instead, agents in the process can take actions, like moral hazard concerns, that could reduce policy effectiveness. Conversely, hiding information could lead to selecting an inappropriate agent to implement action.



A game theoretic approach, especially using the principal-agent model, is one of many ways to help expand the discussion of problems in the interagency. It may not, in itself, explain all of the problems that can occur. However, it can provide a background to uncover the motivations, behavior, actions, and possible impacts on interagency activities. Information sharing is a vital consideration in dealing with any multiparty activity. Inherent in the NSC system is the challenge of trying to not only work through individual agents, but also through a complex structure that involves several committees and departments that are blended into permanent and ad hoc organizations subject to principal-agent problems. It is for this reason that organizational restructuring is not the solution to better development and implementation of national security policy.

One of the issues facing future national security decisionmakers involves the complexity and speed of decisions required in today's vibrant environment of information technology. Perhaps this capability will aid in revelation of the information. Still, the exposure of information and the interpretation of that information that results in deeds are reliant on individuals. Those individuals can ignore repeated requests for openness or hold deep-rooted desires to ensure selected information stays private. However, recognizing these problems is at least a first step to thinking about the implication of the principal-agent problem, and potentially designing ways other than structural change to ameliorate its effects.

## ENDNOTES - CHAPTER 4

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28. Bob Woodward, *Plan of Attack*, New York: Simon & Schuster, 2004, p. 415. This passage describes how Secretary of State Colin Powell had to "decode" positions by Vice President Dick Cheney to ascertain where he stood on national security issues in the interagency process.

29. A principal could also take actions that would reduce the risk of a bad decision, but not meet all goals or objectives of the problem. Spreading risk or selecting a nonoptimal course of action would still create problems for the policy process.

30. See George Akerlof, "The Market for Lemons: Quality Uncertainty and the Market Mechanism," *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, Vol. 84, August 1970, pp. 488-500. This article identifies how "bad" goods eventually drive out "good" ones, given the difficulty of accreting the quality of those goods. Unless an effective mechanism is found to compare quality of ideas or options, then the interagency may have the same problem with driving out good ideas or options and leaving merely bad ones to consider.

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32. Problems with organization, training, equipment, operational planning, and other issues were a result of some agents taking actions similar to ones characterized in moral hazard and adverse selection examples.

## CHAPTER 5

### INTERAGENCY COORDINATION: THE NORMAL ACCIDENT OR THE ESSENCE OF INDECISION

William J. Olson

I have come across men of letters who have written history without taking part in public affairs, and politicians who have concerned themselves with producing events without thinking about them.

Alexis de Tocqueville

In April, 1994, two U.S. Air Force F-15s shot down two U.S. Army U-60 *Black Hawk* helicopters carrying a high-level delegation in northern Iraq. The incident occurred in the no-fly zone in northern Iraq, airspace wholly dominated by U.S. forces. All of the U.S. panoply of sophisticated air control technology was deployed in the area, and there were established procedures well-understood, long-practiced, and solidly in place to govern all U.S. and other air movement in the area, in part to preclude accidental shoot downs.

Both the F-15s and the UH-60s belonged to the same well-established Combined Task Force that had operated without incident for over 3 years. This same organization had successfully commanded and controlled over 27,000 fixed-wing and 1,400 U.S. helicopter flights since its inception in 1991. Dozens of coordinating mechanisms, including weekly meetings, daily flight schedules, operations orders, intelligence briefings, and liaison officers provided redundant layers of cross-checks and communications.<sup>1</sup>

It was a bright, sunny morning. Nevertheless, at approximately 10:30 a.m., an Advanced Medium-

Range Air-to-Air Missile (AMRAAM) from the lead fighter and an AIM-9 *Sidewinder* from his wingman took down the two Army helicopters, killing all 26 souls onboard.

The obvious question is how could such a thing have happened when everything was designed to keep such a thing from happening? And next, what lessons can we learn so we do not do this again? As Scott Snook notes in the most thoughtful study on the incident, after 2 years of investigations with every resource made available, no single cause was identified.<sup>2</sup> There was no smoking gun, no one to blame—though the prejudice in such circumstances is to seek someone to blame—no bad guys, no equipment failure, no institutional foul ups, nothing to fix; no failure of interagency coordination. Everyone did what they were supposed to do, trained to do, were experienced at doing. No useful lessons to learn.<sup>3</sup> However, 26 people died.

Snook's answer as to why is both sophisticated and intricate and draws significantly on the work of Charles Perrow on the "normal accident" and on the literature on organizational behavior. In essence, this argument holds, that in complex, highly interrelated systems—or complex organizations with many different, but intricately interlaced components—accidents are bound to happen as a natural consequence of the system—or organization—operating as it is intended to do. In this sense, "normal" does not mean frequent but "an inherent property of the system to occasionally experience this interaction," that is, a series of unfortunate events.<sup>4</sup> Perrow's starting point was the nuclear accident at Three Mile Island, near Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, where the accident happened because everyone involved did what they were supposed to do, which under the conditions was precisely what made things worse.

It is rarely the case on those occasions requiring interagency coordination that everyone did what they were supposed to do, but the operative assumption in much of the discussion on the problems confronting U.S. policy in an age of conflict without borders is that those problems arise from the lack of something, namely sufficient coordination by various interagency players to accomplish a shared, desired outcome. This failure produces unintended consequences or results opposite of what is intended, or, at best, increases the cost and friction of success. What is generally not included in this analysis is a hard look at the assumption, namely that the culprit is the lack of coordination for which there are knowable, reasonable, ready fixes. It is an approach that also does not take a hard enough look at the nature of the subject under discussion, the interagency process, for which a diagnosis is called for and a prescription provided. It is a case in which the desire assumes the outcome it wants: The need for better coordination will produce better coordination because the problem is the lack of coordination, or of sufficient coordination, and the solution is better coordination.

The need for answers on how to address the problem of coordination is immediate because the issues are of great pith and moment affecting the fate of nations and the lives of many. Analysis and prescription of the dilemma of failure to coordinate go well beyond that presented by Snook and Perrow, although their views need to be factored in. The literature abounds with analysis. It ranges from the sublime to the subliminal. There is a theoretical framework to suit every taste and presidential commissions, think tank reports, congressionally mandated studies, punditry solutions, and bureaucratic teams swarming with analysis



and proposals. For each analysis, there is a stable of proposed solutions or fixes, thus there is no want of studying the problems and no lack of answers as to how to make things work better. In addition, there have been several attempts to reform the government to improve coordination and a host of departmental or interagency initiatives to address the recurrent conundrum.

The single largest reorganization of the national security architecture since the Constitution came with the National Security Act of 1947 creating the Department of Defense (DoD), the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), and the National Security Council (NSC). This reorganization preceded the Cold War. It followed immediately after the United States had just won the greatest war in human history. Despite the success, the mood was that more needed to be done to ensure the integration and coordination of the national security system. There have been a number of less major reorganizations, including the DoD Goldwater-Nichols reform in 1988. Yet, the question of what to do to improve interagency coordination is a hardy perennial. But the interesting question goes begging. The question is not what we need to know and what to do with it, what needs changing; but why is it, given all that we know, that the things we do don't work.<sup>5</sup>

What follows is a discussion of the limits of coordination, what might be termed the "bureaucratic uncertainty" principle. This is not a theoretical exercise but one based on a life of experience in both the practice of interagency coordination and efforts to affect the process or improve it. The inherent assumption of the argument is that in the operation of any large, complex system—especially one as diverse and inherently rococo as the U.S. Government and the processes it

employs to make and affect decisions—there are in-built limitations on just how far efforts to coordinate can go. There is a tax levied on any effort to improve the process that keeps it from achieving the outcome that logic seems to call for and promise, what might be called the operation of friction, to borrow from Clausewitz. This “fog of bureaucracy” means an inevitable gap between desire and outcome, theory and practice. This produces a further complication: There will always be glitches in the system, which, in turn, will continually persuade people that there are problems, which there are; and that these can be known, which is only partially true; and that they can be fixed, which is an unexamined assumption; by their particular prescriptions, which often fail to understand the problem and thus create new problems while merely shifting the locus of current issues, meaning a familiar surprise in unexpected ways from unanticipated directions. As H. L. Mencken quipped: “For every complex problem, there is a solution: neat, plausible, and wrong.” If the views that follow are correct, then they will have no theoretical significance and no practical utility.

## **THE NEED IS ACCEPTED**

Interagency coordination is a much sought after objective. Most agency players recognize the need for and value of practicable coordination with other agencies and components. While a worthwhile goal in normal circumstances, complex contingencies and crisis situations make such coordination an imperative. What many such contingencies and crises have demonstrated, however, is that coordination is a concept often more honored in the breach than in

practice. This reality has led to a corresponding effort to seek conceptual approaches that will improve the possibility of coordination and the development of institutional practices that will implement better interagency coordination.

The creation of the whole NSC structure and DoD following World War II was one of the first major attempts to improve national-level coordination of security policy formation and implementation. Waves of DoD reform since 1947, indeed, the whole emphasis on “jointness” in recent years, has grown from recognition of the need for more and better coordination among the uniformed services. Various national security directives aimed at interagency coordination in general point up the continuing awareness of the need for improvements in interoperability among all U.S. Government agencies.

The growth of complex environments for U.S. international engagements—the growth of a host of multinational, international, and nongovernment actors—have only made implementing U.S. national strategic goals more difficult, necessitating even broader coordination efforts going beyond U.S. agencies. There is no diminution of the need for coordination, of the institutional awareness of its importance, or of efforts to effect it.

At a macro level, the Clinton administration, no stranger to episodes that created unwelcome situations in Somalia and Haiti and elsewhere, embarked on a major reassessment of how the interagency process worked, or failed to work, and produced a national security decision document for the President’s signature that would have codified changes within the national security architecture designed to address shortcomings in interagency coordination. It was not signed before

the Bush administration came in and largely sidelined the effort, only to face a series of problems of its own, which have resulted in a relook at the earlier effort and some steps to implement its findings.

Of course, following the attacks in New York and Washington in 2001, the 9/11 Commission and House and Senate investigations on intelligence failures also produced tremendous reform pressures most of them designed to address perceived shortcomings in interagency coordination, whether in intelligence collection and analysis or in policy formulation and execution. The creation of the Department of Homeland Security was also intended in part as a bringing together of disparate agencies in order to improve coordination on matters of domestic security and preparedness. More recently there have been a number of studies and legislative initiatives to develop reorganization initiatives that go beyond Goldwater-Nichols to reform not just DoD but the government more broadly.

At a more micro level, the events of September 11, 2001 (9/11), and now the continuing war in Iraq have only stepped up the demand for better methodologies to enhance interagency coordination. In one such response, the NSC directed the interagency community to pursue improvements in coordination. The result has been a number of efforts, particularly the creation of a new office in the Department of State for Construction and Stabilization to improve coordination between State and Defense in future conflicts and in post-conflict environments.

Separately, DoD also acted on its own. As a result of NSC direction, DoD instructed combatant commands to establish Joint Interagency Coordination Groups (JIACG) to effect that objective. The various combatant commands created JIACGs with the intent of

improving interagency coordination. While all of these iterations share this common history, the individual efforts evolved in very different directions, reflecting local realities and prejudices of the commands or their leaders. As a result, in this single case involving DoD and components directly under its authority, thinking about how to organize these efforts, how to harmonize them, and how to improve overall interagency coordination through the use of JIACGs moved off in different directions at tangents to one another. It became apparent that the coordination effort needed to be coordinated. In response, U.S. Joint Forces Command (JFCOM) stepped in to help harmonize the various efforts and make them more consistent and then reach beyond DoD to work with the interagency community.

As part of the effort to improve the functioning of JIACGs, U.S. Southern Command (SOUTHCOM) and JFCOM signed a memorandum of understanding to use SOUTHCOM's JIACG as a prototype for designing and structuring interagency coordination efforts. What this rapid but only cursory overview illustrates is that there is considerable agreement on the need to improve interagency coordination. Indeed, there has never been any argument against it, not recently and not since 1947 when the modern adventure began.

## **LIMITS TO COORDINATION**

While recognizing the need for coordination, it is important to understand that there are some inherent limits to the ability to coordinate and a number of recurring, systemic obstacles that make it difficult when it is not impossible. Coordination is an important goal, but it is an unnatural act and it is fraught with troubles

that the act of coordination itself can create or make worse. In addition, any sufficiently complex system, especially one based on interactions among diverse and highly articulated organizations, will be prone to paradox and dilemma as part of its natural habitat.

## **DESIGNED TO FAIL**

The Framers of the U.S. Constitution did not want an efficient government. They wanted a better government than that provided by the Articles of Confederation, but they feared for the future of liberty in any too strong concentration of power. They thus deliberately and with intent set about to create a divided government, one in which power was both separate and shared in order to inhibit coordination. Thus, at the beginning and at the very core of the U.S. concept of government are deeply embedded obstacles to coordination that can only be overcome at a significant constitutional and therefore political price.<sup>6</sup>

Over the course of some 220 years of constitutional government, giving practical meaning to the Designers' intent, this has meant the adumbration of restraints and constraints in mysterious and unrecognized ways that permeate operations and are integral to its success, as conceived by the Framers. At the outset, then, preceding any modern drive for efficiency and unity of effort lies original intent. Its operation in any particular circumstance is likely to be obscured by long use but it works in mysterious ways its blunders to perform. While specific examples are hard to pin down, what follows is a partial catalogue of some of the obstacles.<sup>7</sup>

## **Bureaucracy 101.**

The iron rule of bureaucracy is that to divide is to disorganize. Modern government relies upon bureaucratic structures to accomplish important, complex tasks. Given the diversity of those tasks and the interests involved, there must be differentiation in government structures to respond. Thus, underlying the essence of modern government is the need to divide and subdivide work in order to do work. The consequence, however, is to undermine unity of effort by this device. Once having so sundered the tasks, the need immediately arises to put things back together again. But the bureaucratic Humpty Dumpty resists such efforts.

The modern U.S. Government is a maze of bureaucratic structures, overlapping agency responsibilities, redundant assignments, conflicting authorities, and institutional objectives. These have grown over time in response, perhaps, to parochial logic and immediate need but rarely in response to one another or in a consistent logic that applies across the breadth of government. This piecemeal evolution means piecemeal execution and a welter of activities resistant to logical analysis or coherent coordination. What was not arrived at by a logical process is likely to resist logical solutions. Limits on logical analysis and on human cognition also mean that the complexity will escape understanding, and thus any solutions will only be partial. Since many of the formulas for interagency coordination seek to encompass realms beyond the U.S. Government, to include foreign governments—not to mention U.S. state governments—and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), the playing field is even more of a dodecahedron.

## **The Coordination Fallacy.**

Everyone wants coordination, but no one wants to be coordinated. Whatever the value of coordination, which is generally recognized as a good thing, it means giving up some degree of autonomy to others, which also generally involves limits on what one can do unilaterally—that is, coordination can reduce the efficiency of an individual agency to carry out task-specific, agency-specific objectives.

There is in geography a noted principle that holds that near things are closer than far things, which is one reason why people will shop close to home rather than going long distances even if some items are less expensive further away. This applies in bureaucratic terms as well. One's agency and its requirements are closer to where one lives than some distant, esoteric value such as the putative benefits of coordination. Coordination also imposes costs, real in terms of money and manpower, and institutional in terms of unanticipated demands. Further, coordination generally engages the "lead agency" concept, which means having some other agency in charge of, or having some directive authority over, another agency's assets and capabilities. Together, these raise esoteric "turf" issues as well as more concrete concerns over conflicting legal authorities, mission capabilities, and career objectives. These issues remain uncoordinated or unreconciled even as coordination efforts proceed.

The failure of law enforcement and intelligence communities to share information across agency boundaries is a familiar tale; and although some of that can be explained by legal bars on the flow of information, which can be addressed, there are institutional habits



that mean that something will always be withheld. Law enforcement officers share sources only reluctantly among themselves much less with outsiders; and the importance of protecting sources and methods within the intelligence community means that there are limits on how far any intelligence organization will go to share data, especially since coordination requirements increase the scope of who must be included on a logic of their own—with foreign governments, for example—that runs counter to the mandate to protect sources and methods. There is no hard and fast rule than can change this reality, although changes can shift or obscure awareness of its existence.

### **Coordination Paranoia.**

In the minds of many agency players is the conviction that coordination is a cover for control. Turf is an inescapable fact of interagency life, and one of the most persistent elements of that environment is the belief that one agency's desire to coordinate is merely an effort to control another agency's resources and agenda. In some circumstances, this means that "coordination" is an exercise in discovering the hidden agenda and in constraining what another agency can do.

In the current environment, for example, constant DoD calls for more and better coordination begin to look like demands that other agencies conform to DoD imperatives and business practices. At the same time, other agencies' demands for coordination look to DoD like efforts to lay claim to deep pockets of money and manpower. This problem is made no easier by a significant imbalance in the relative institutional weight of DoD. In comparison to other agencies, DoD is

outsized and overstaffed — the 800-pound gorilla. It has resources that dwarf all other agencies in the national security mix combined. This leads to disproportionality in bureaucratic infighting and outcomes. Some of the constant claims for more and better coordination are artifacts not of necessity but of DoD imperatives not shared or recognized by other. Even so, there are institutional limits on the feasibility of coordination.

Institutional imperatives outlast individuals and collective efforts to reorganize or reform. Most reforms do not address how institutions learn and raise up their inmates to institutional values. They ignore the incentive structures and the long-term perpetuation skills that characterize institutions. At some point in the life of an institution, its goals, its perpetuation, become more important than the mission, certainly more important than any transient value that conflicts with long-term, well-understood institutional self-awareness. Outlasting current enthusiasm is an institutional art form.

## **Coordination and Policy.**

Coordination cannot make bad policy good. There seems to be a working assumption that failure is the result of poor coordination, and that if everyone were better integrated and efforts more coherent, then bad things would not happen to good intentions. This is an often ignored assumption.

A political decision to engage in unwinnable situations or environments that are not subject to political solutions currently available cannot be made viable by interagency coordination or its lack. Poor coordination, however, is likely to mask the policy failure, making it difficult to understand where the

problem lies. Indeed, it is often easier to blame trouble on coordination failures than to single out policy failures in politically charged environments. Since it is inherently hard to separate analysis of policy failure from political partisanship, especially in the midst of a controversial situation, there is even less of a tendency to examine “root causes” which may take their signals from facts not in evidence.

### **Coordination Lag Time.**

Not every problem can be anticipated. Individual situations are likely to present unanticipated challenges, or the *New York Times*, CNN, or *Washington Post* are likely to publish something that excites policymakers, short-circuiting established procedures. It takes time to decipher the exact nature of the challenge and then to figure out what type of response is necessary and appropriate. Unfortunately, problems occur at the speed of light, analysis of problems occurs at the speed of sound, and responses occur at the speed of bureaucracy.

In addition, different parts of the coordination environment, embassies, for example, may have a very different sense of policy urgency and policy reality than does Washington, or some critical component thereof. Reporting up and down the chain takes time, decisions on courses of action take time, bringing together capabilities to respond, should action be called for, takes time. Circumstances may not be forgiving of these needs—all of which are inherent in the need to coordinate, and more and better coordination is likely to increase the lag time.

Since the demands such situations levy are situation-specific, there are real limits to what more

and better coordination can do to improve things and, given the timing problem, those very efforts may make matters worse. Better coordination may place unwanted constraints on the independence of action needed by local responders in demanding, changing circumstances. It is difficult to create robust coordination mechanisms and maintain flexibility of action from top to bottom.

There are also different coordination needs at different levels, and these are not necessarily fungible or mutually supportive. Needs higher up the food chain can create problems for on-sight response and vice versa. Better coordination is not necessarily helpful in this context.

## **BACKGROUND NOISE**

Coordination occurs in a context that is different for each agency or involved player. Different agencies have different missions, decisionmaking cycles, organizational structures, cultures, habits and practices, incentive structures, and legal constraints and imperatives. This institutional environment limits what agencies can do, but those limits are different for different agencies and can come into play in unpredictable ways.

If true for different agencies within a single government, these environmental issues are even more significant in multilateral situations, yet more complex in cases involving international players, and even more tangled if one adds in nongovernment actors. The challenge facing the Department of Homeland Security in working with 50 states and thousands of local governments across the country is a coordination opportunity of poignant proportions that illustrates the labyrinthine nature of the environment.

## **Coordination vs. Harmony.**

While harmonization of interagency efforts is a goal, it can never be more than partially successful. If this were not so, it would not be necessary to have distinct agencies with differentiated goals and objectives, it would not be necessary to coordinate.

## **Coordination Cannot Print Money.**

If coordination cannot make up for bad policy, it also cannot make up for limited resources or legal authority to accomplish assigned tasks adequately. It also cannot make up for the fact that various parties necessarily involved in accomplishing goals that require coordination come with different resource capabilities and constraints that cannot be changed in a timely way.

The Congress is the only branch of government authorized to appropriate funds. Its processes and the considerations that move them are inherently different from those in the executive branch. The timing for approving money works on a schedule that is only partly amenable to interagency coordination or even to the demands of a crisis. No demands for more and better coordination can escape this wild card factor.

## **Coordination Asymmetry.**

Coordination is not pursued for its own sake but for some other desired goal. Since agencies have different missions and organizational imperatives, those goals do not necessarily align between and among very different agencies, and desired outcomes

may be similarly mismatched. For example, there are many activities law enforcement agencies may become involved with in a particular combatant command's area of responsibility (AOR) that require little, if any, coordination with DoD, but the reverse is not true. Indeed, while most agencies in a given AOR may have a whole range of unilateral mission possibilities, there is virtually no mission possibility for a combatant command that does not require coordination with others. Thus, the relative imperatives for coordination can vary dramatically over time and in specific situations.

### **Routine vs. Complex Coordination.**

Coordination in routine circumstances does not necessarily support coordination in complex contingency or crisis situations and vice versa. The same agencies may be involved, but the agency players may be very different at levels above routine engagement. Crisis also tends to foreshorten many of the normal processes that take time to effect in routine environments.<sup>8</sup>

The combatant commands all are charged with developing complex contingency plans for emergencies. The need for these plans is a routine requirement that has produced large and complex staffs and complicated procedures devoted solely to their formulation and maintenance. Yet, the operative assumption is that no plan survives contact with the event planned for. Nor do most other agencies that DoD must coordinate with have similar plans or habits for dealing with contingencies. Their habit or business practice is more ad hoc, if not more flexible. There are, thus, significant differences in operational styles that

produce real differences in response. These exist well before the imperative of coordination arrives on the scene.

### **Coordination Doesn't.**

Not everything that needs coordination in theory can be coordinated in practice. In some cases, this may be the result of irreconcilable differences in goals, as between partner nations, or between the executive branch and Congress. In such circumstances, options or efforts may have to be foregone or radically limited because the players cannot agree on a course of action. In some cases, it may be a function of too little time available to reconcile major differences between players who face a common problem—the problem moves faster than decisionmaking or coordination capabilities.

In almost every effort to improve interagency coordination the “mission-creep” moment arrives. That is the point at which realization comes that coordination, to work, is an ever expanding circle. It must extend to include all relevant players. In the current environment, the play list is increasingly large and diverse. Thus, more and more must be brought within the ambit of coordination. Doing so, however, increases the friction working against success.

### **Lessons Learned Seldom Are.**

Lessons are more often identified than learned and incorporated for the future. There are two inherent problems involved in lessons learned exercises. The first problem is an artifact of the analytical process. After-action reporting aimed at deriving lessons learned begins with the assumption that there are problems

that can be identified and from which lessons can be learned. Given the systemic realities cited above, this is an assumption that is rarely disappointed.

Whether the lessons learned process can, however, dissociate inherent limitations from correctable shortcomings is problematic, and in itself is one of the inherent limitations. It is also difficult for any lessons learned effort to distinguish situationally unique shortcomings, that is, failures in one endeavor that are not necessarily transferable to other situations. In other words, some situations may have nothing to teach. The second problem with learning lessons is that it is generally poorly understood how institutions learn lessons. We know how to teach and train individuals, but it is far harder to make the same lessons understood by the organizations that rely on such individuals. Unfortunately, people move on and the lessons and training move with them. Thus, lessons are not always incorporated as part of the institutional repertoire.

### **The When of Coordination.**

If different agencies have different cultures and missions, they also proceed to deal with problems in very different ways. They think about problems differently, and they plan for situations differently. Some have very ad hoc methodologies, some have very complex and articulated systems. This history of thinking and planning, the different ways that they are done, accompany any effort in which a particular agency is subsequently called upon to coordinate with another. When, then, should coordination take place? At what phase of interagency life should the virtue of coordination be realized? At the thinking stage? At the planning stage?



In the past, coordination considerations have tended to occur not at the thinking and planning stages unique to individual organizations, but in circumstances when actions among agencies must actually be carried out. For example, there is very little interagency involvement in DoD decisions on force structure, doctrine, training, equipment, or manpower needs. There is very little contribution from the interagency community in DoD's planning for complex contingencies, at least not in the sense that coordination often demands. The reverse is generally the case. The Department of Justice, for example, pays little heed to other agencies imperatives or needs when it comes to training or the cases it pursues.

This means that individuals charged with coordinating activities in particular situations, at higher policy levels, must deal with a range of decisions affecting their ability to coordinate that were made by other people, in other circumstances removed from the immediate situation and responding to a very different set of priorities, incentives, and requirements. To expect agencies—not to mention international and nongovernment players—to coordinate much earlier in the cycle of dealing with complex contingencies or crises raises considerably the stakes involved in coordination and makes it more difficult to accomplish, to make relevant to particular situations, or to sustain meaningfully over time. Coordination does not age well. It is labor intensive and time consuming; absent immediate peril it tends to senesce.

### **The Where of Coordination.**

Coordination must happen at different levels, but coordination at those various levels is not fungible.

Coordination at one level does not necessarily translate to other levels. The combatant commands, for example, already engage in a host of coordination activities up and down the chain of command. Most of these happen daily and are fairly robust. They are, however, appropriate to the time and place that they occur and may be of no use in complex contingencies or crises, which may call up coordination needs that supersede the routine ones or call into play individuals much higher up in the respective organizations, who had little need to know one another before the demands of the crisis.

In many cases, action officers coordinate routinely, whereas it is at general officer, ambassadorial, and assistant secretary levels that policy coordination takes place. These later players quite often have not worked together closely before an event requires it. These players may have no familiarity with the lower-level coordination or see it as unhelpful in the situation at hand. In addition, agencies—their subcomponents—do not necessarily align and, while interagency connectivity may exist, it may not be lashed up at the appropriate points in ways that work, especially in nonroutine environments that put sudden stresses on relationships.

Agencies, for example, often have compatibility problems in their communications capabilities. That fact alone represents the result of a history of different acquisition strategies and situational needs that existed before a crisis required coordination. This type of compatibility problem is not limited to communications gear but replicates up and down the chain in complex organizations that have institutional lives and needs that pre-exist the requirement for coordination beyond its boundaries.

## THE PARADOX OF COLLECTIVE ACTION

If coordination is an unnatural act, one that circumstances may require but conditions make difficult to achieve, then what is the incentive to coordinate at all? In most cases, the imperative to coordinate generally arises when routine efforts to deal with complex situations fail or prove insufficient. It is crisis or complex contingency situations that expose the limits of individual agency efforts and force an awareness of the need for collective action.

The worst time, however, to develop the necessary coordination efforts and mechanisms is in the middle of a crisis when circumstances are not very forgiving of business as usual. But if it is crisis that provides the incentive, then it is hard to get the players to play together when that very incentive is lacking. The solution would appear to be routinizing coordination for crisis. And various mechanisms for exactly this purpose exist, the NSC system being the best overt example. The dilemma is that routinization tends to rob the process of the kind of incentive that endures the mere routine. Over time, routine robs the effort of its sense of urgency, and normal practice reasserts itself.

## COGNITIVE DISSONANCE

The literature abounds with explanations of how and why governments do dumb things, take decisions that upon reflection were clearly wrong and wrongheaded. It is common in the analysis of information-processing procedures of governments to find the following key concepts:

- Cognitive consistency: People tend to relate unfamiliar events or facts to what they already know, thus ignoring key inconsistencies that are critical to understanding the problem at hand and solutions that might work.
- Evoked set: People tend to look for the familiar, the known, and overlook the new and different, thus tending to make decisions that are familiar but not necessarily situationally astute.
- Mirror image: People tend to see the bad in others and the good in themselves, assuming the worst in intentions in others and the best of motives in their own efforts.
- Group think: People in groups tend to fall in line with the common outlook or emerging consensus, overlooking contradictory information or approaches that go against the grain.
- Satisficing: People often stop with “good enough” solutions, going for what is at hand or is familiar and not examining possibilities in more depth.

Taken together, these concepts explain why people in groups often decide to do things that individually they know to be dumb. Various prescriptions for how to avoid these minefields abound. Yet, the problem is that for every cliché, there is an equal and opposite cliché; that each of these negative realities is matched by a set of positive ones:

- Cognitive consistency: Learning advances by relating the unknown to the known, by seeing linkages and connectivity that produce deeper insights.
- Evoked set: Every situation is not unique; if it were, theory would be impossible.

- Mirror image: Moral judgment, determining right and wrong, is essential to justifying policy, and this often requires seeing bad actors for what they are.
- Group think: No decision is possible without consensus; indeed, interagency coordination is predicated on the notion of arriving at a common approach. Thus, at some point, everyone must fall in line.
- Satisficing: The better is the enemy of the good; at some point, discussion must stop and a decision be reached.

There is no formulaic solution to resolve this dissonance. It is inherent to institutions and the people within them. It will come into play to inform bad decisions and good ones depending upon circumstances and personalities. No improvements in the mechanism for coordination will obviate the operation of these factors. It may increase their role, making failure a distinct possibility for reasons not attributable to a lack of coordination. Coordination, after all, dramatically expands the circle for group think, which is the goal.

## **BUREAUCRATIC OUTLIERS**

The interagency process is, by its nature, an essentially bureaucratic exercise. For all its good intentions, the interagency process lives in a world in which two of the most critical components of its life exist outside its control, and to which it must respond despite whatever logic may suggest itself. These are the Presidency and Congress, and through them the constitutional realities and public concerns that pervade the U.S. political system.

No matter the logic of interagency coordination, individual presidents, acting out of their own sense of priority and purpose, will take decisions or pursue courses of action contrary to the best bureaucratic advice or need. There is a story told about President Eisenhower that at a press conference he took a line that ran counter to what his administration had hitherto been maintaining. Two correspondents covering the conference wondered what it meant. One of them concluded that the only explanation the government would be able to offer was that, "The President does not speak for the administration." Whatever else may happen, while presidents may insist upon better coordination, they will remain outside the process and exert an influence upon it, willy nilly. But forces within administrations also exist to resist presidents.

One political wag once observed that the "cabinet are the president's natural enemies," meaning that, even though he appoints them and can fire them, they will, nevertheless, come to represent issues in ways that are likely to clash and ultimately to frustrate presidents, if not directly thwart them. Cabinet members, to a certain degree, also exist outside formal coordination mechanisms and can make decisions, based on their own understandings, that run counter to other imperatives. Thus, at the very heart of the coordination process lie forces independent of it that may operate against it. If this is true within administrations, it is even more the case when it comes to Congress.

The role of Congress in the interagency process is infinitely complex and mostly misunderstood. It exists at virtually every level, and at many of those it works contrary to the possibility of interagency coordination. Formally this comes into play in the authorizing and appropriating roles of Congress in which 535 members

and the public they represent exert authority over the executive branch in all its myriad parts. The fate of the president's budget in recent Congresses, generally and generously described as "dead upon arrival," is indicative of a larger fact: that the president proposes and Congress disposes. Although actual results follow from a rich Kabuki dance of give and take, pressure and wooing, the budget as it finally emerges is not a logical product but a practical one, arrived at by compromise and barter. But the process does not stop here.

The long history of interrelationships between Congress and various executive branch agencies means a host of informal contacts and associations that defy easy description or analysis but that influence outcomes nevertheless. One of the underlying assumptions of many calls for interagency coordination is that coordination claims are policy neutral and politically uncontroversial. This is rarely the case. All such claims threaten existing interests and long-established relationships for which protective mechanisms exist. Individual components within agencies can use congressional contacts to frustrate the policies of their agencies and sometimes even of presidents. Executive Branch agencies have learned to play Congress and the administration off against one another much as children learn to play their parents. When money and careers are on the line, higher purpose is likely to come in a distant third.

These are the normal circumstances. Everything compounds when there are significant policy differences between Congress and the president. When these exist, then a heavy tax is levied against the ability of the government to function, much less function efficiently. On key issues of national security, it is rare that Congress can override a strong, determined

president, but it can significantly increase the cost of doing business and warp any efforts to produce coordinated results. There is no way to predict how this will play out in particular circumstances, but it is a wild card that will always come into play.

The interplay of these various inherent features of the coordination environment makes actual coordination a bigger challenge than it appears at a glance. It helps to look at these general points in a more specific context.

## **THINKING ABOUT JOINT INTERAGENCY COORDINATION**

The need for interagency or intergovernmental coordination is not new. Awareness of that need and efforts to effect better coordination are not new. The landscape is populated with studies to this effect, with laws and executive orders directing it, a variety of institutional arrangements seeking it, and a growth industry in analyzing it. Failures to achieve it are biblical in their proportions. No one is opposed to interagency coordination—in principle. Everyone wants it—in principle. It's a fine idea whose time has come—in principle.

So why don't we have it? Why do we continue to seek it? Why is effecting it so elusive and difficult? As noted earlier, part of the problem lies in the fact that not everything can be fixed, not everything can be coordinated, and that, while many things are fine in principle, they are a problem in practice for the agencies and people who must make silk out of the sow's ear.

Part of the problem also lies in the fact that the fine ideas and sentiments upon which coordination are founded often do not get at basic questions, as in,



“What’s in it for me?” What is the incentive for coordination for the individuals involved and their agencies? In many cases, the incentives, in fact, are negatives one. There are a lot of reasons not to coordinate, or at least not to do so beyond a certain point.

### **Incentives.**

To repeat the lesson from geography, near things are closer than far things. Institutional rewards and incentives, values and sentiments are near things. Coordination is a distant virtue, fine in principle but risky in practice. Coordination, in some situations, means compromise. Not just both parties giving up some of what they want separately so that they can accomplish a common purpose, but one party having to surrender an important institutional value for an immediate but temporary gain whose value is not recognized by the institution. Compromise under these circumstances is not likely to be rewarded. There are not many agencies that have a career track for individuals who make a practice of compromising away the agency’s core values. Punishment will continue until morale improves and reason is restored.

Real coordination—that called for by nonroutine situations—tends to take place under the pressure of circumstance, of overwhelming need in the face of demanding situations. Real coordination is almost always ad hoc. Thinking about coordination tends to take place in the shade, in a more relaxed atmosphere. It has the time to reflect, but it also lacks the sort of imperatives that make real coordination necessary and thus powerful enough to overcome the natural inertia inherent to bureaucratic engagement requiring nonroutine coordination. It is almost always post hoc,

if not proper hoc. The effort surrounding the JIACG concept is a case in point.

Although directed by the NSC Deputies Committee as an idea consonant with the needs arising from 9/11, the current evolution of the JIACG concept has a longer heritage, in part linked to the coordination problems and efforts to find solutions for them raised in a number of U.S. international involvements since Somalia. The current situation in Afghanistan and now Iraq add piquancy to the search for coordination, having surfaced their own versions of the perennial problem. The present JIACG effort is now a three-track process rapidly becoming four. These tracks are not necessarily complementary.

The first track is the directive to create a JIACG with a counter terror focus at the combatant commands. The second is the standing up of JIACGs at the commands with very different structures and goals. The third track, following behind and playing catch-up, is the effort to analyze interagency coordination needs through the JIACG prism. The fourth is the effort to harmonize the various different iterations of the JIACGs and relate this analysis to practice, with the interagency community in general and with the specific iterations of JIACGs at combatant commands as they evolved in response to the initial directive, in particular to meet broad interagency as well as international coordination goals.

Common to all four tracks is the notion that there is a need for interagency coordination that is not currently being met; and the corollary to this that there is some sort of institutional solution; that is, there is some type of organizational structure that can be put in place to meet the need. The first track contemplated no specific solution. The second has a number of specific responses

unique to local thinking. The third is alive with ideas, not all of which are pulling in the same direction. There is a considerable lack of coordination in the efforts to coordinate. The fourth, the effort to connect ideas to practice, is in parts unknown. As noted above in the discussion on disconnects, it is unclear whether there is any crosswalk between theory and practice, at least in the short term. There is simply no imperative to settle coordination problems in the abstract. Also common to all the current efforts is that the project is almost wholly a DoD conceived and driven exercise with little or no interagency input or stake.

There is, thus, considerable diversity in the JIACG's background and make-up but little in it that offers real-world incentives to individuals or their institutions beyond the generally shared sentiment that coordination is a good thing.

### **Now vs. Not Now.**

Most of the thinking concerning JIACGs, as a functioning body, envisions what the organization would do and what it should look like based on findings about shortfalls in interagency coordination in complex contingencies, crises, or similar situations. The validation, limited though it is at this point, of the JIACG concept is based on exercises in responses to complex contingencies or crisis. Most of the effort to establish a real-world organization, however, occurs in a routine environment without a crisis imprimatur, and that same effort contemplates the JIACG existing day to day in just such a routine environment.

What this approach does not do is to make clear just what a JIACG would do, can do, must do day to day. In the resource-constrained environment

of most combatant commands and interagency players—not to mention international organizations and nongovernment players—it is unclear what value added a JIACG brings to daily operations that is sufficient to justify its claim on limited resources, especially since most of the routine coordination needs are already being met. If they are not being met, it is unclear where the shortfalls are in this routine environment or how those shortfalls adversely affect the command or interagency players to a degree that makes heroic solutions advisable and acceptable.

This presents implementing the JIACG concept with the rainy day syndrome: if it's raining, you can't fix the roof; if it isn't raining, you don't need to fix the roof. The need for a JIACG is most recognized in crises situations when you don't want to have coordination problems, but it's too late to avoid them; but implementing the concept in noncrisis environments lacks the imperative needed to make it possible. It is not clear at this point that the JIACG concept has the horsepower to prove its value added on its own.

There is also a serious disconnect between the JIACG as it has evolved in practice at the combatant commands and the JIACG concept as it has evolved through discussions, white papers, meetings, and exercises. The gap is growing, and bridging the gap is becoming more problematic.

## **Marketing.**

If you are going to sell refrigerators to Eskimos, you'd better have one hell of an icemaker. At the moment, the only link between JIACGs as directed and established and JFCOM concepts of how they should be formed, staffed, and employed is the money and

the resources that JFCOM can put on the table. This is table stakes money, however. It gets you in the game, it does not keep you there. People and institutions—the combatant commands and other agency players—value interagency coordination but they like the JIACG because it comes with “freebees.” The two things, interagency coordination and JIACG, are not, therefore, synonymous. It is not clear that the current concept can be sold long term or is sustainable in practice.

The evolution of the JIACG concept highlights some of the recurring realities of various efforts to reform or improve the interagency process: There is at this point no common definition of what interagency coordination is. No common understanding of what the goal of interagency coordination is. For example, is the goal of the JIACG:

- to manage various interagency players and their activities in order to achieve military objectives?
- to orchestrate interagency activities to achieve national objectives regardless of individual agency objectives?
- to facilitate other agencies in realizing their objectives?
- all of the above?

How these questions are answered influences perspective on and perception of the effort.

It is also unclear at what level of engagement the JIACG is meant to coordinate. Some see it as operating at the strategic level. Some see it at the interface between operations and strategy. Some see it at the operational level. Coordination requirements run from top to bottom. They are different at these different levels in scale, importance, immediacy, and intensity. Is the

JIACG meant to address and resolve problems at all these levels?

While the tendency has been to graft the JIACG in at the combatant command level, there is a parallel tendency to create the impression that this single institution will be able to address coordination issues at multiple levels across a broad range of issues, in routine matters and in crisis, from counterterrorism to disaster relief, not only within the U.S. Government but with various international players and NGOs, a fairly large, not to say boundless task. This is a tall order, and while appealing, the current concept does not have a clear enough marketing strategy to sell the idea. Or, if it can sell the idea, the production department cannot meet the orders. The customer may be sold on the idea of a refrigerator, but he wants to own a refrigerator, not the concept of one. He also wants service after the sale. It is not clear that the JIACG concept or its reality can deliver.

If these problems trouble a solution in this small set, efforts to reorganize or reform on a government-wide or international scale face daunting problems. In contemplating the needs of interagency coordination, however, the gap between reality and desire is rarely examined nor taken into consideration.

## THOUGHTS ON NEXT STEPS

Somewhere near the beginning of the *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle's handbook on the ethical life prepared for his son, he makes the argument that, "We must be content, then, in speaking of such subjects and with such premises to indicate the truth roughly and in outline, and in speaking about things which are only for the most part true and with premises of the same kind to

reach conclusions that are no better.” In human terms, we must accept things that are for the most part true, not absolutely so. The above discussion limns some of the critical elements in why expectations, the hare, sprint past outcomes, the turtle, in our tale. The limits of coordination almost never receive attention and, if they do, are quickly forgotten to get at the real business of reform and reorganization. The argument, however, is not meant to suggest that reform and reorganization are never possible or are never accomplished on a sound principle and have no hope of useful results. Indeed, even though the reforms in 1947 never matched the hopes for them, they achieved a great deal, as did the Goldwater-Nichols reform.

The situation is too serious to despair. Despite all the obstacles to interagency coordination in general and to its evolution in individual agencies or at individual combatant commands, the simple fact remains that interagency coordination is everyone’s fate regardless of their personal or their institutional feelings. While coordination can never be perfect, it can be better or worse.

It does work, although never as expected or wanted. It works for several reasons.

### **The Olson Effect.**

As much as I would like to lay claim to the idea, the Olson in question is Mancur Olson, who argued, contrary to received wisdom on minority rights and majority control, that in public life or in the life of organizations, small groups organize before big ones and that it is the actions of these “minority” groups that cause change or effect outcomes.<sup>9</sup> As a general rule, coordination works best when key individuals

desire it and work to make it happen on a small scale within discrete operations, for limited purposes, over defined time frames, with clear lines of authority. Unity of effort is simply not possible on a grand scale, but it is achievable on more intimate terms.

### **The Hayek Effect.**

Frederick Hayek, the 1974 Nobel Prize winner for economics, argued for the concept of spontaneous order, namely that in many human activities order can emerge spontaneously as a result of human actions but not as a result of human design.<sup>10</sup> In large, complex interactions, such as the marketplace, there are forces of order that will emerge even though the overall environment cannot be controlled. In more prosaic terms, this is the story of the Little Engine that Could. In large part, interagency coordination, while resistant to grand designs and commissariat control, often occurs because the people within organizations are dedicated to outcomes that produce coordination, sometimes against all odds. Again, this generally occurs on a small scale where unity of effort is within reach.

### **The Pasteur Effect.**

Louis Pasteur once observed that “chance favors the prepared mind,” that is, luck may play a role in outcomes but being prepared to take advantage of what fate and fortune—and hard work—offer is more likely if one is prepared to see advantage and use it. In the marketplace of interagency coordination, better outcomes are likely if people within the system are empowered to act in ways that produce coordination. The common factor in all of the above elements is people; individuals, and the choices that they make.



The issue is how best to prepare them for success and to make choices that produce the best possibilities.

### **Incentive Structure.**

One of the secrets of the success of Goldwater-Nichols in forcing a reluctant bureaucracy against its will and over its objections to move towards “jointness” was the effort it devoted to changing the system of rewards within the agency, in this case DoD. By the simple act of making jointness a criterion for promotion within the separate service branches, individuals within the system began making choices, a la Hayek, the combined effect of which was to produce more jointness. Large scale reforms and reorganizations, while never perfect, if well-conceived and aimed at the right critical nodes can produce an approximation of the goal. It is success on the margins, but that is where profit lies.

The goal, therefore, is not to create the perfect solution but a workable one, one that can be sold to someone likely to buy. The buyers are out there. No one who has ever experienced the problems arising from dealing with complex contingencies or crises is immune to wanting to see better coordination. The question is how to channel that experience and desire into an effort that can meet expectations without engaging institutional sensitivities, to identify the incentives that can operate over time to make coordination better, if not perfect.

There are no magic solutions, but such solutions as there are do not lie in piecemeal reorganizations or bureaucratic reforms. Following World War II, the United States engaged in a wholesale reorganization of its national security apparatus to better cope with the

emerging political realities. Ultimately, this process rested upon a lengthy and difficult assessment of America's responsibilities in a new world order, one of the principal features of which was a far more activist and engaged United States. Even so, it took close to 40 years of working on the interagency process to tweak it into a working model, with Goldwater-Nichols being the capstone of the process in DoD that brought home in one package changes on the margins that fulfilled many of the promises for coordination.

Unfortunately, the United States did not engage in any such in-depth reassessment, at least not a coherent one, following the end of the Cold War. Instead, the United States relied on institutional arrangements and habits that had proved remarkably successful in meeting the then challenges. What circumstances have since revealed, however, is that these arrangements do not necessarily posture us to respond to the current environment. Lacking a consensus-building reassessment, the response has been piecemeal reforms and partial reorganizations. What is needed now is a new National Security Reorganization Act, similar to the 1947 effort, that contemplates a thorough-going restructuring of how the United States responds to the new world order in which the United States is the most prominent player. It is likely that the cumulative result will only be changes on the margins, never resolving the bureaucratic uncertainty principle.

Even with such an effort, inherent constraints on interagency coordination will keep the logically desired outcome from becoming reality. What is logically possible is not always practically possible and almost never bureaucratically possible. Logic, to be logical, must be coherent, consistent, and self-confirming. The process of engaging interagency players and interests is

none of these, nor can it be made so. A certain humility is called for and greater patience.

## ENDNOTES - CHAPTER 5

1. Scoot Snook, *Friendly Fire: The Accidental Shootdown of U. S. Black Hawks over Northern Iraq*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000, p. 4.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 10.

3. Snook does offer a number of insights, which might be regarded as lessons, but if the normal accident is integral to the operation of complex, densely linked systems or organizations, lessons now will not prevent accidents in the future, although they might prevent the same accident.

4. Charles Perrow, *Normal Accidents*, New York: Basic Books, 1984, p. 8.

5. This is not the place to review all the various streams of thought only to note that all of them have something valuable to add to understanding a very complex process in which the search is for simple solutions. Graham Allison and Philip Zelikow, *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis*, 2nd Ed., New York: Longman, 1999, chart many of these theoretical rivers in their analysis of the Cuban Missile Crisis, an event whose consequences point up the seriousness of the issues involved. In trying to understand policy formation and execution, the Rational Man model, the Bureaucratic Actor model, the Classical model, the Organizational Actor model, the Organizational Behavior model, the Great Man model, the Abilene Paradox, Parkinson's laws and more all come into play. In addition, there is a host of supporting analysis that examines critical systemic issues. There is, for example, Irving Janis, *Victims of Groupthink: A Psychological Study of Foreign-Policy Decisions and Fiascoes*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1999, that looks at how consensus environments can produce lock-step thinking that ignores evidence and contrary indicators in favor of group solidarity. There is the important work by Roberta Wohlstetter, *Pearl Harbor: Warning and Decision*, Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1962; and Richard

Betts, *Surprise Attack: Lessons for Defense Planning*, Washington, DC: Brookings, 1982, on why intelligence failures happen and to some degree are unavoidable. There is no lack of theoretical sophistication. The problem is that it is not an integral part of the drive for interagency coordination nor is it likely ever to be.

6. What generally is missed is that the main goal and tendency of bureaucracy is to centralize power to create greater efficiency at the cost of individual action, while the thrust of American constitutional government is to work to frustrate concentrations of power and reduce efficiency. There is a contradiction at the heart of the American political/bureaucratic system that is not to be got round. This is in addition to the inherent, systemic irrationality that accompanies any complex organization.

7. At the very outset of the U.S. Government, before political parties, before precedents on how the various branches of government were set, an important three-cornered rivalry developed involving Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, and Alexander Hamilton over the very nature of government. It was from this rivalry that political parties eventually emerged. Although both Jefferson and Hamilton were part of Washington's administration, being Secretary of State and Secretary of the Treasury respectively, Jefferson secretly worked with Madison in the House of Representatives and various external operatives to undermine the administration's fiscal policies. Jefferson helped to orchestrate an increasingly bitter public campaign against Hamilton directly and Washington indirectly. It failed, but it laid the foundations for long-term animosities and precedents that have influenced government and bureaucratic practice down the years, a point generally missed when precedents are discussed. See Sean Wilentz, *The Rise of American Democracy: Jefferson to Lincoln*, New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 2005, pp. 40-62.

8. There are rough and ready tradeoffs to be made between routine and complex activities. These are not straightforward.

Bureaucracies are set up to deal with stable, routine tasks; that is the basis of organizational efficiency. Without stable tasks there cannot be a stable division of labor. . . . [W]hen changes come along, organizations must alter their programs; when such changes are frequent and

rapid, the form of organization becomes so temporary that the efficiencies of bureaucracy cannot be realized.

Charles Perrow, *Complex Organizations: A Critical Essay*, third edition, New York: Yale University Press, 1986, p. 4. Also see James Q. Wilson, *Bureaucracy: What Government Agencies Do and Why They Do It*, New York: Basic Books, 1989.

9. Mancur Olson, *Logic of Collective Action: Public Goods and the Theory of Groups*, Boston: Harvard University Press, 2nd Ed., 1971; and *The Rise and Decline of Nations: Economic Growth, Stagflation, and Social Rigidities*, New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1984.

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## **CHAPTER 6**

### **THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE AND STRATEGIC INTEGRATION: HOW REINFORCING STATE AS AN INSTITUTION WILL IMPROVE AMERICA'S ENGAGEMENT WITH THE WORLD IN THE 21st CENTURY**

**Louis J. Nigro, Jr.**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

The U.S. National Security Strategy (NSS) of 2006 responds to a 21st century international environment very different from previous eras. The main threats to U.S. security will no longer come from other successful and powerful competitor states, but from unsuccessful failed and failing states whose very lack of power permits them to be exploited by nonstate actors. One implication is that it will require far better strategic integration of all the elements of America's national power to ensure its security. The diplomatic, economic, legal, informational, and psychological elements of national power must be blended with military not only to counter transnational threats but also to redress the weakness of failing states.<sup>1</sup>

In order for diplomacy to play an effective role in such integrated efforts, the United States will need a more robust diplomatic establishment. This means primarily more human resources. As the lead diplomatic instrument, the Department of State needs substantial redundancy in its work force, especially those assigned overseas in embassies, consulates, and other missions, in order to better educate and train the

work force; in order to staff interagency mechanisms to integrate U.S. Government efforts in planning and preparing reconstruction and stabilization operations; to provide a “surge capacity” to staff reconstruction and stabilization operations when necessary; and to staff the new American Presence Posts outside of capitals as well as regional posts—two of the key elements of Transformational Diplomacy.<sup>2</sup>

The international environment portrayed in the NSS will require not only qualitatively different but also quantitatively greater diplomatic resources to ensure the achievement of foreign policy and security goals. The NSS identifies a new menace in failed and failing states; this does not mean that relations with stable states can be ignored or deemphasized. Indeed, the commitment to multilateralism implies that we need to ensure that we have the diplomatic means to build and maintain partnerships and coalitions with other successful states to resolve problems associated with unsuccessful ones. Enhanced multilateralism implies that significant new diplomatic resources be added to the totality of resources to implement foreign and national security policy.<sup>3</sup>

Secretary of State Colin Powell foresaw the need to reinforce the institution in its role as the indispensable first step in adding to the diplomatic resources available in the 21st century. The program of institutional reform and reinforcement—the Diplomatic Readiness Initiative (DRI)—that Powell conceived and carried out as Secretary of State from 2001 to 2005 achieved substantial success in key areas: personnel resources, information technology, diplomatic facilities, and diplomatic security. This program should be continued, amplified, and extended into the future to ensure that the institution continues to be able to respond to threats and challenges that will surely grow more complex.<sup>4</sup>

Secretary Powell also foresaw the need for a new mechanism to integrate the elements of national power to conduct stability and reconstruction after combat operations, which suddenly became essential responsibilities in the aftermath of operations in Iraq. In 2004, he created the Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stability (S/CRS) to coordinate all U.S. Government efforts in the areas of reconstruction and stability in the aftermath of military operations.

Powell's successor, Condoleezza Rice, foresaw that continued reform and reinforcement of the diplomatic institution would be necessary. In January 2006, Rice announced the Transitional Diplomacy Initiative, which aimed at "transformation of old diplomatic institutions to serve new diplomatic purposes," and shaping the Department's ability to respond to its changed responsibilities in the new international environment.<sup>5</sup>

This chapter provides an overview of the State Department's institutional capabilities, in terms of its human resources, operational platforms, and budget. It then describes the Powell and Rice initiatives to reinforce and reform the Department of State—Powell's DRI and S/CRS and Rice's Transformational Diplomacy. It argues that the efficacy and success of all three depends on the willingness to provide the resources necessary to enable State to play an appropriately greater role in engaging and shaping the world in accordance with U.S. national interests.

A better resourced State Department should not come at the expense of the budgets of other agencies. Those budgets—including the Department of Defense's (DoD) much larger budget—should be determined according to objective criteria, not in terms of competition for scarce dollars. The budgets of all civilian



agencies involved in America's engagement with the world in the 21st century—State, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), the Peace Corps, Commerce, Agriculture, Treasury, Homeland Security (DHS), and others—should be increased to meet the growing importance of international engagement.<sup>6</sup>

## **THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE: CAPABILITIES AND RESOURCES**

A review of the resources that the Department of State has to discharge its responsibilities is revealing, because it shows the relatively limited investment that America makes in the lead agency for engagement with the world, especially in comparison with the investments made in other agencies, like DoD, DHS, and the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA).<sup>7</sup>

### **People.**

The State Department is staffed by employees who fall into three personnel systems: foreign service officers (FSOs) and foreign service specialists (FSSs) who are committed to overseas service and worldwide availability but who also serve in Washington, DC; civil service employees who serve in Washington and other locations in the United States; and locally engaged staff (formerly known as Foreign Service National employees) who are non-Americans hired locally overseas to serve in our embassies, consulates, and other missions.

There are about 11,250 Foreign Service personnel. About half of these, some 6,400, are FSOs, while the rest are FSSs. FSOs hold commissions from Congress and are professionally specialized in the fields of consular

affairs, economic affairs, political affairs, management, and public diplomacy. FSSs provide important technical, support, and administrative services in seven major categories: Administration, Construction Engineering, Information Technology, International Information and English Language Programs, Medical and Health, Office Management, and Security.

There are about 8,100 civil service personnel who, like Foreign Service personnel, contribute to the mission of supporting the foreign policy of the United States. They do this in many areas of specialized professional expertise: security, information management, office management, administration, logistics, engineering, legal affairs, budget and financial management, accounting, and foreign affairs and international policy and operations. State's total American personnel strength has not changed much since 1950. To put State's human resources in perspective, there are about 8,500 colonels and lieutenant colonels in the active U.S. Army alone, and a total of 11,488 among Army and Air Force colonels, as well as Navy captains. All active duty military officers number about 200,000. Two researchers estimate that "there are more musicians playing in the military services' bands than there are Foreign Service Officers at State."<sup>8</sup>

The Foreign Service is overwhelmingly "forward-deployed." About two-thirds of all FSOs and FSSs are serving abroad at any given time. Two-thirds of the posts in which they serve are classified as "hardship posts" because of the difficulties of life and work in those countries. Half of all FSOs and FSSs serving overseas are in hardship posts.

## **Defense.**

The United States maintains formal diplomatic relations with approximately 190 nations and maintains embassies in 165 of their capitals. (The United States does not maintain formal diplomatic relations with Bhutan, Cuba, Iran, North Korea, and Taiwan.) The United States has consulates in 63 cities and 16 other offices and missions, including the United Nations in New York, the Organization of American States in Washington, DC, international organizations in Vienna, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in Brussels, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development in Paris, the United Nations Economic, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in Paris, the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva, and the European Union in Brussels.<sup>9</sup>

The State Department works with other agencies in diplomacy, both at home and abroad. With very few exceptions, U.S. diplomatic missions are interagency organizations, with some 45 U.S. Government agencies represented abroad, including USAID, DoD, DHS, the departments of Commerce, Agriculture, Justice, Energy, Treasury, Veterans Affairs, and Health and Human Services. The Peace Corps, Drug Enforcement Agency, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Environmental Protection Agency, Federal Aviation Administration, and Internal Revenue Service have representatives in some diplomatic missions. In most missions, American State Department personnel are outnumbered by interagency colleagues. In fact, State employees make up just over one-third of the staff at U.S. Government posts worldwide. The number of U.S. diplomatic missions overseas (embassies and consulates) has

changed from 322 (58 embassies, 264 consular posts) in 1940, to 265 (99 embassies, 166 consular posts) in 1960, to 243 (163 embassies, 80 consular and other posts) today. Thus by virtue of working in an embassy country team, FSOs are experienced interagency players, and so are their colleagues from other departments.

### **Budget.**

The FY2007 International Affairs Budget request for the Department of State, USAID, and other foreign affairs agencies totaled \$35.1 billion. Of that, \$23.7 billion was for foreign operations, that is, foreign aid and international assistance. That left about \$10 billion for State Department operations, to include all of State's operating expenses, security, construction and maintenance of embassies; contributions to international organizations and peacekeeping; and the Broadcasting Board of Governors and other programs. That \$10 billion represented .00115 percent of the total Federal budget request of \$870.7 billion. Under the 2007 budget request, resources devoted to the International Affairs budget would fall from \$35.7 billion to \$35.1 billion. While the resources devoted to the foreign operations portion (foreign aid and international assistance) would grow from \$23.4 billion to \$23.7 billion, State's operational budget fell from \$10.7 billion to \$10.1 billion.<sup>10</sup>

### **Secretary Powell's Reform and Revitalization Program.**

Colin Powell revitalized the State Department. He came to State in 2001 at a critical moment in the history of the oldest executive department. State seemed to

have arrived at a nadir as an institution; its human resources were declining in numbers and demoralized. In 2000, more than 1,600 State employees signed a letter that called the Department “a rusted-out diplomatic hulk that [was] no longer seaworthy,” and pleaded for “a long-term, bipartisan effort to modernize and strengthen the Department of State.” A number of compelling studies had analyzed the Department’s decline and prescribed remedies, all of which included an increase in resources. These included studies by the Council on Foreign Relations, the Center for Strategic and International Studies, the Stimson Center, McKinsey and Company, and the U.S. Commission on National Security in the 21st Century (aka the Hart-Rudman Commission). Powell took action on a reform and revitalization program that had four main targets: Human Resources, Information Technology, Overseas Facilities, and Security.<sup>11</sup>

The precondition for Powell’s ability to implement his reform and revitalization program was increased budgetary resources. Powell’s reasoned appeals to Congress and reorientation of State’s responsiveness to congressional concerns and sensibilities resulted in very substantial increase in funding. State’s operating budget went from \$6.6 billion in 2001 to \$9.1 billion in 2004. These increases were to be “permanent parts of the budget, not one-time catch-up costs.”<sup>12</sup>

Powell’s first priority was human resources, the Department’s people. During the Clinton administration, budget cuts at the Department produced a staffing decline that severely limited effectiveness. From 1994 to 1997, “State hired only enough people to replace half the number of employees lost to retirement, resignation, or death.” By 2001, State had a deficit of 400 mid-level FSOs, 300 mid-level FSSs, and more than

600 Civil Service employees.<sup>13</sup> In 2007 the department needed 1,000 new hires (generalists and specialists) to make the Foreign Service whole, allowing a meaningful training flow and staffing vacant positions.

Powell's Diplomatic Readiness Initiative was aimed at increasing State's personnel numbers over 3 years to "reestablish the State Department's diplomatic readiness by raising overall staff levels to full strength, recruiting specialists with critical language and technical skills, and improving personnel training." Adding staff would create a certain "personnel float" in the work force that could be exploited to better prepare State's people through additional professional training, provide a surge capacity to direct to key issues or crises, and furnish more candidates for tours of duty in other U.S. Government agencies to make State a more effective partner in interagency efforts.<sup>14</sup>

The DRI was successful in terms of quantitative improvement. Under the DRI, State's aggressive recruiting and retention efforts were rewarded by the addition of 2,000 employees over and above attrition from 2001 to 2004. Persons taking the Foreign Service written examination went from 8,000 in 2000 to 20,000 in 2004. Recruiting was plussed up by web-based technology, a team of recruiters, diplomats in residence at 15 colleges and universities, and new hiring mechanisms. Minority recruitment went up from 13 percent in 2000 to 19 percent in 2003.

As the quantitative side of the DRI removed State's staffing deficit, the qualitative side enhanced professional training opportunities substantially: The Department provided 40 percent more training in 2004 than in 2001. Leadership and management training was made mandatory for mid-level Foreign Service and civil service employees, and leadership training

opportunities for junior and senior employees were expanded, reflecting Powell's intention to instill a culture of leadership throughout the Department's work force. Enrollment in foreign language training increased by over 50 percent from 2001 to 2004. Arabic language training grew by two-thirds.

Powell's reform program also ensured that the State work force was better equipped to carry out the mission. The key area in this regard was Information Technology (IT). State's computer networks were described as "close to system failure" and as being "the worst in the U.S. Government." A typical country office in Washington had one or two computers with Internet access for use by eight to ten desk officers and office management specialists. In few embassies and consulates did all employees have Internet access on their desktops. Messages between Washington and missions overseas were transmitted much as they had been decades before. Powell's program changed all that. By mid-2003 State had deployed worldwide a modernized unclassified IT system with Internet access to 43,500 desk tops and a modernized classified computing capability at 224 posts overseas. Both systems will be updated on a 4-year cycle to maintain their effectiveness. IT security was strengthened, and 530 specialists were hired while controlling attrition.<sup>15</sup>

Overseas facilities was the third priority target of the Powell program. The 1998 terrorist bombings of embassies in Kenya and Tanzania led to closer scrutiny of State's security profile at overseas missions. Review boards discovered that some 88 percent of embassies did not meet minimum security standards. Observers recorded that many missions were woefully incapable of providing an adequate environment for living and working to advance U.S. interests in foreign countries.

Powell's program, buttressed by a permanent line item in the budget for embassy construction, maintenance, and security, accelerated greatly the construction of safe, secure, and functional embassies. In 2001, only one new embassy was completed per year. In the period 2001-04, 13 embassy building projects were completed, 26 more were under construction, and 12 more in the planning stage, thanks to a Long Range Overseas Building Plan that utilized flexible but standard embassy designs, integrated design reviews, and rigorous reconciliation of project scope and budget. By mid-2004, some 99.8 percent of the 1,269 physical security projects identified in 2002 were completed.<sup>16</sup>

Security was the fourth priority target of the Powell reform program. Besides the achievements in physical security of facilities, the Powell program reinforced security in an array of State's activities. In terms of the institution, the DRI hired more diplomatic security officers and contracted security-clearance operations to the private sector, freeing up diplomatic security officers and specialists for more specialized duties.<sup>17</sup>

## **SECRETARY POWELL'S RECONSTRUCTION AND STABILIZATION INITIATIVE**

In the wake of the lessons learned in the reconstruction phase of military operations in Iraq, Powell created in August 2004 the Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization (S/CRS) to "lead, coordinate, and institutionalize U.S. Government civilian capacity to prevent or prepare for post-conflict situations, and to help stabilize and reconstruct societies in transition from conflict or civil strife so they can reach a sustainable path toward peace, democracy, and a market economy."<sup>18</sup> Since then, S/



CRS developed into an interagency office adapted to coordinate and harmonize U.S. Government efforts in a world in which reconstruction and stabilization operations (RSO) had become increasingly frequent. Between 1990 and 2003, the United States conducted seven major post-conflict RSOs—Somalia, Haiti, Bosnia, Kosovo, Liberia, Afghanistan, and Iraq—and contributed significant resources and capabilities to many more, including Cambodia, Mozambique, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Guatemala, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Colombia, and East Timor. The expectation is that the United States will need to become more proficient in conducting and contributing to RSOs in the future as failed and failing states breed transnational threats.

S/CRS has developed operational models for managing civilian deployments to aid in conflict prevention and response. These could be integrated either with the U.S. military or with international peacekeeping missions. The Country Reconstruction and Stabilization Group in Washington is an interagency senior-level group that would provide guidance to the field and recommendations to policymakers as courses of action regarding potential RSOs are being considered. As the planning for post-conflict operations develops, a Humanitarian Reconstruction and Stabilization Team Group, which is a civilian interagency group, would be embedded into the combatant command as early as possible to work on integrated planning as the military is called upon to develop crisis action plans. Finally, Advance Civilian Teams (ACT), teams of civilian experts drawn from throughout the U.S. Government, would be deployed to the field, either with or without the military. The ACT, in different configurations and sizes, could be deployed as far down the chain as the brigade level, depending on the security situation on the ground.<sup>19</sup>

S/CRS is an interagency office, staffed by employees from many agencies of the U.S. Government. As for State, in order to be effective in RSO operations, it will have to draw on State Department human resources in a surge mode. That means that State employees will have to be educated and trained for RSO, including being assigned to S/CRS for tours of duty. State will need to be adequately resourced for RSOs before the need arises for deployment. This means that State will need to have at the ready resources and a cadre of people with specialized skills who can respond rapidly. Current employees trained in RSO would form the Department's Active Response Corps available for future operations.

The Department has already begun training its first Active Response Corps teams. As diplomats trained in RSO retire or move to other employment, they could form a Reserve Response Corps on "standby" status that the Department could draw on as needs arise. State's surge capacity would be part of a larger surge capacity, not only throughout the federal government but also in state and local government and civil society to tap into vast experience and skills. The Department would need resources in being to conduct RSOs and its current budget request includes funding for a Conflict Response Fund to provide flexibility for rapid response to crises, to jump-start programs, and to meet unforeseen gaps. State is creating a Global Skills Network and operational database to track existing contracts and programs for reconstruction and stabilization so that the skills can be identified and augmented effectively. The Department, moreover, has developed courses on conflict transformation that are taught at the Foreign Service Institute.<sup>20</sup>

Unfortunately, S/CRS risks becoming a very good idea that was not provided with adequate resources to ensure its success. The administration has requested only one-third of the funding that it needs—just \$75 million of the \$225 million necessary for its original design to be implemented. Senator Richard G. Lugar, Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and a strong supporter of S/CRS, expressed in public his frustration that the administration has not pursued this with the appropriators in Congress. This could be changing. As former Director General of the Foreign Service, W. Robert Pearson said in a valedictory interview, Transformational Diplomacy “is a new departure because the Secretary [Rice] has highlighted its critical importance with a major initiative and has worked hard to create a plan to this end, including finding the resources to move ahead.”<sup>21</sup>

Three events in November and December 2005 signaled the commitment of the United States to reconstruction and stabilization operations as a key tool of American foreign policy. On December 7, President Bush issued a Presidential Directive giving the Department of State the responsibility “to coordinate and lead integrated U.S. Government efforts, involving all U.S. Departments and Agencies with relevant capabilities, to prepare, plan, and conduct stabilization and reconstruction operations.” On November 28, DoD issued Directive 3000.05, to establish DOD policy governing U.S. military participation in reconstruction and stability operations, stating that

stability operations are a core U.S. military mission that the Department of Defense shall be prepared to conduct and support. They shall be given priority comparable to combat operations and be explicitly addressed and integrated across all DOD activities including doctrine,

organizations, training, education, exercises, materiel, leadership, personnel, facilities, and planning.

On December 20, the United Nations announced the establishment of a new body, the Peacebuilding Commission, to marshal resources and develop integrated strategies for post-conflict peacebuilding and recovery, as well as to focus attention on post-conflict reconstruction and institution-building efforts and to improve coordination of effort within and outside the United Nations regarding post conflict recovery. The United States had strongly advocated the creation of the Commission.<sup>22</sup>

## **SECRETARY RICE'S TRANSFORMATIONAL DIPLOMACY INITIATIVE**

Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice announced her Transformational Diplomacy initiative in January 2006, stating that in the 21st century the United States confronted a new and different international environment. Therefore, "the greatest threats now emerge more within states than between them" and "the fundamental character of regimes now matters more than the international distribution of power." The implications of this for foreign and security policy are enormous and demand a greatly enhanced strategic integration to engage the world. "In this world, it is impossible to draw neat, clear lines between our security interests, our development efforts and our democratic ideals," Rice said. "American diplomacy must integrate and advance all of these goals together."<sup>23</sup>

Secretary Rice defined the objective of Transformational Diplomacy as "working with our many partners around the globe to build and sustain

democratic, well-governed states that will respond to the will of their people and conduct themselves responsibly in the international system." She called for the "transformation of old diplomatic institutions to serve new diplomatic purposes." Rice asserted that the United States had successfully pursued similar initiatives in the past and cited America's diplomatic responses both to the onset of the Cold War and to its end. Moreover, Rice praised her predecessor's "leadership of the men and women of American diplomacy into the 21st century" by investing, not only in modern technology and facilities, but by "investing in our people" and creating and filling 2,000 new positions in the Department.<sup>24</sup>

Transformational Diplomacy has five pillars: Global Repositioning; enhancing regional focus; localization; developing new skills; and working jointly with other federal agencies. "Global Repositioning" will steadily shift diplomatic personnel resources away from Europe and Washington to other regions of the world, "the new front lines of diplomacy." Initially, 100 positions were moved to Africa, South Asia, East Asia, and the Middle East. "Enhancing Regional Focus" will respond to regional and transnational challenges by more effectively "forward deploying" diplomats to regional centers, such as for public diplomacy and infrastructure management. "Localization" will move diplomats out of capitals and into smaller posts, including one-diplomat American Presence Posts in important noncapital cities. "Meeting New Challenges with New Skills" will seek to give diplomatic personnel more and better professional education and training, enhance multiregional expertise, require service in challenging postings, and prepare diplomats "not only to analyze policies and shape outcomes, but also to run programs."

“Empowering Diplomats to Work Jointly with Other Federal Agencies” will prepare diplomats to work “at the critical intersections of diplomatic affairs, economic reconstruction, and military operations” especially in the Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization; as Political Advisors (POLADs) to military commands and other DOD offices; and in the State-DOD Officer Exchange Program.<sup>25</sup>

Some of the elements of Transformational Diplomacy, while useful and necessary, are not new. Take “Global Repositioning,” for example. The State Department shifted resources in a concerted way to newly independent states after the breakup of the Soviet Union, and State’s Strategic Planning Process regularly realigns resources with responsibilities to achieve objectives from region to region, within regions, and from post to post according to a 5-year planning cycle. Other elements are associated with traditional goals of diplomacy: “Localization” and “Regional Focus,” for instance, are the right things to do, but will founder if enough new positions are not created to permit implementing these pillars without reducing resources in other areas. Similarly, “empowering” diplomats with new skills and endowing them with more interagency experience makes perfect sense, but will be extremely difficult to achieve without allocating major additional resources to the Department.<sup>26</sup>

The real problem with Transitional Diplomacy is that it is not funded. If Transitional Diplomacy is to make a major contribution to improving America’s ability to respond successfully in foreign and national security policy, it must have adequate resources. The question of resources is as central to the success of Secretary Rice’s Transformational Diplomacy Initiative as it is to the prosperity of Secretary Powell’s earlier

initiatives. The United States should have a diplomatic establishment that is as adequately resourced to play an effective role in America's engagement with the world as the U.S. military is adequately resourced to play its role in that engagement. Transformational Diplomacy's "global repositioning" of diplomatic personnel should imply the expansion of the human resource base, so diplomatic resources devoted to allies and friends in Europe, for instance, should not be diminished to provide new resources for other regions of the world. The "forward deployment" and "localization" of diplomatic human resources should not be accomplished by reducing diplomatic presence in Washington and capitals. Providing diplomats and other foreign affairs professionals more and better professional education and training should not come at the expense of current staffing. Finally, and most clearly, empowering diplomats to work jointly with other federal agencies will require more of them to engage effectively with bigger and better-resourced agencies like DoD and DHS.

The U.S. Government should not make the mistake it made in the period after the breakup of the Soviet Union. In the early 1990s, the Department of State opened 22 new diplomatic missions in the newly independent states formed out of former Soviet lands and in the Balkans. These new missions required the staffing of more than 215 positions. To meet these needs, the Department of State was forced to move positions and staff from other preexisting missions and to reduce language and other training. This is the wrong prescription for managing America's engagement with the world in the 21st century.<sup>27</sup>

## CONCLUSIONS

Secretary Powell's DRI and S/CRS initiatives and Secretary Rice's Transformational Diplomacy initiative were appropriate responses to correct assessments of how the Department as an institution can best fulfill its responsibilities in guiding America's engagement with the world in the 21st century. But the question of resources will make or break the implementation of all three initiatives. All three depend heavily on maintaining the right amount of redundancy in human resources and to a lesser extent on nonhuman resources, like the funding for S/CRS's Conflict Response Fund and funding to expand both the Foreign Service Institute's specialized training for RSOs and reinforcing its traditional training programs language and other skills. It is therefore of serious concern that the 2007 budget looks to be the end of the 5-year period of growth in State's funding.<sup>28</sup>

The Department of State's human resources should be reinforced in both quantity and quality. Some measures that should be taken are:

- Expand the American direct-hire human resource base by another 400 to 500 to permit the Department to (a) increase staffing at emerging priority nations without understaffing missions to long-time allies and trading partners, (b) create a "training float" to permit expanded language and professional development, and (c) maintain a "surge capacity" to respond to future reconstruction and stabilization contingencies.
- Enable State to reemploy retired employees on contracts.
- Extend careers of employees whose skills are adapted to the key areas of strategic integration,



such as the POLAD program, the State-DOD Officer Exchange program, and S/CRS, all of which should expand.

- Explore the possibility of “extreme flexibility recruiting,” to find human resources for specific future situations, including potential major contingency operations.
- Expand opportunities for State employees to take advantage of senior level education, especially in interagency settings.
- Establish a senior-level educational institution at State to educate State employees side by side with employees of other agencies.

State needs greater workforce redundancy to recruit, educate, and train a work force that will accomplish the goals of Rice’s Transformational Diplomacy initiative and that will be able to staff the Reconstruction and Stabilization coordination mechanism that Powell created to coordinate U.S. Government-wide efforts at reconstruction and stabilization. Transformational Diplomacy’s goal of focusing more resources on regions of concern and rising regional powers should not have to come at the cost of reducing resources to regions of stability and peace, because our partners in promoting stability and peace in the former category reside in the latter locations. Transformational Diplomacy’s goal of focusing more closely on what is happening *inside countries* than at what is happening *between countries* appears to imply more and better educated and equipped diplomats, not fewer who are less well-prepared for understanding different cultures. Recruiting and equipping more diplomatic personnel with professional skills needed for effective diplomacy in the 21st century is a sensible and relatively

inexpensive investment. Like all investing, starting earlier is always better than starting later.

## ENDNOTES - CHAPTER 6

1. The National Security Council, *The National Security Strategy of the United States*, Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2002; and The National Security Council, *The National Security Strategy of the United States*, Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2006.

2. That U.S. diplomacy is underresourced is by no means an original statement. Frank C. Carlucci and Ian J. Brzezinski, *State Department Reform: Report of an Independent Task Force Cosponsored by the Council on Foreign Relations and the Center for Strategic and International Studies*, Washington, DC: Council on Foreign Relations, 2001, summarizes the findings and recommendations of a number of studies on reform of the State Department. All contain recommendations for more resources for State, especially in human resources, overseas facilities, and to modernize information technology. See pp. 39-45. See also Richard C. Lugar, "Speaking Out: Strengthen Diplomacy for the War on Terror," *Foreign Service Journal*, Vol. 80, Nos. 7-8, July-August 2003; Charles G. Boyd, "A Radical Proposal: Make State Functional," *Foreign Service Journal*, Vol. 78, No. 5, May 2001; and James M. Lindsay and Ivo Daalder, "How to Revitalize a Dysfunctional Department," *Foreign Service Journal*, Vol. 78, No. 3, March 2001.

3. See Morton Abramowitz and Leslie H. Gelb, "In Defense of Striped Pants," *The National Interest*, Spring 2005.

4. Colin L. Powell, "Testimony at Budget Hearing before House Budget Committee," Washington, DC, March 15, 2001, at [state.gov/secretary/former/powell/remarks/2001/1266.htm](http://state.gov/secretary/former/powell/remarks/2001/1266.htm); Colin L. Powell, "Testimony at Budget Hearing before Senate Foreign Relations Committee," Washington, DC, March 8, 2001, at [state.gov/secretary/former/powell/remarks/2001/1164.htm](http://state.gov/secretary/former/powell/remarks/2001/1164.htm); Colin L. Powell, "Testimony at Budget Hearing before House International Relations Committee," Washington, DC, March 8, 2001, at [state.gov/secretary/former/powell/remarks/2001/1148.htm](http://state.gov/secretary/former/powell/remarks/2001/1148.htm).

5. In December 2005, a Presidential Decision Directive formally gave Rice's State Department the responsibility for coordinating U.S. Government reconstruction and stabilization operations. Office of the Spokesman, U.S. Department of State, "President Issues Directive to Improve the United States' Capacity to Manage Reconstruction and Stabilization Efforts," U.S. Department of State, Office of the Spokesman, Fact Sheet, January 18, 2006, "Transformational Diplomacy," at [www.state.gov/r/prs/ps/2006/59339.htm](http://www.state.gov/r/prs/ps/2006/59339.htm).

6. Michael J. Mazarr, *Policy Review*, March 2006, p. 11, at [www.policyreview.org/000/mazarr.html](http://www.policyreview.org/000/mazarr.html).

We ought to shift \$50 billion to \$70 billion from the U.S. defense budget into a wider array of instruments of national power more attuned to the needs of conflict against alienation. These would include strengthened and expanded institutions of diplomacy, scholarship programs, a vastly reenergized Peace Corps, direct foreign aid, debt forgiveness, a restored and expanded public diplomacy program, and much else.

7. This paper is limited to arguing for the need to increase resources to the Department of State. But the same kind of argument could and should be made for State's closest collaborator in managing America's engagement with the world— USAID. According to the National Security Strategy, development stands with diplomacy and defense as one of the three key elements of national security strategy. USAID is the lead agency in fostering development, providing humanitarian assistance and supporting democracy in over 100 countries around the world. USAID's staffing situation is even more dire than the Department of State's. With a workforce similar in composition to the Department of State, the staffing of USAID consists of U.S. Foreign Service and Civil Service Officers, complemented by Locally Engaged Staff (LES). USAID currently has 2,227 direct hire employees, consisting of 1,095 Foreign Service Officers and 1,132 Civil Service employees, with an additional 5,000 LESs. Thinly spread overseas, USAID relies heavily on U.S. private volunteer organizations, locally based nongovernmental organizations, American businesses, international organizations, and trade and professional organizations to carry out its mandate. With the Global War on Terrorism, increasing numbers of Foreign Service Officers and

resources have been devoted to Iraq, Afghanistan, and failing and failed states, which has diminished USAID's ability to carry out its mission. See *The USAID Primer: What We Do and How We Do It*, Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2006; and Andrew Natsios, "USAID in the Post 9/11 World," *Foreign Service Journal*, Vol. 83, No. 6, pp. 19-24.

8. Janine Davidson and Tammy S. Schultz, "What the Troops Really Need," *The Washington Post*, December 17, 2005, p. 23.

9. Office of the Historian, U.S. Department of State, "A History of the Department of State during the Clinton Presidency (1993-2001)," July 2001, at [www.state.gov/www/about\\_state/history/cl17.html](http://www.state.gov/www/about_state/history/cl17.html).

10. *Ibid.*; Bureau of Resource Management, U.S. Department of State, "FY 2007 International Affairs, Function 150; Budget Request," February 6, 2006, at [www.state.gov/s/d/rm/iab/2007/html/60201.htm](http://www.state.gov/s/d/rm/iab/2007/html/60201.htm).

11. Two excellent surveys of Powell's institutional reform program are by Foreign Affairs Council, *Secretary Colin Powell's State Department: An Independent Assessment*, November 2004, at [www.diplomatonline.org/taskreport1104.pdf](http://www.diplomatonline.org/taskreport1104.pdf), p. iii; and Christopher M. Jones, "The Other Side of Powell's Record," *American Diplomacy*, March 6, 2006, at [www.unc.edu/depts/diplomat/item/2006/0103/jone/jonesc\\_powell.html](http://www.unc.edu/depts/diplomat/item/2006/0103/jone/jonesc_powell.html). See also Thomas Boyatt, "'FAC'-Checking: Secretary Powell's State Department," *Foreign Service Journal*, February 2005, which is a useful extract of the Foreign Affairs Council report; and Grant Green, "Transforming the State Department Quietly and Effectively," *Washington Times*, July 6, 2003, distributed by the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State, at [usinfo.state.gov](http://usinfo.state.gov).

12. *Powell's State Department*, p. v.

13. *Ibid.*

14. Shane Harris, "Powell's Army," *Government Executive*, Vol. 35, No. 16, November 4, 2003, p. 5, at [www.govexec.com](http://www.govexec.com); and Jones, p. 10.

15. U.S. Department of State, *Performance and Accountability Highlights, Fiscal Year 2003*, Washington, DC: Bureau of Public Affairs, U.S. Department of State, December 2003, at [www.state.gov/m/rm/rls/perfrpt/](http://www.state.gov/m/rm/rls/perfrpt/); and U.S. Department of State, *Performance and Accountability Highlights, Fiscal Year 2004*, Washington, DC: Bureau of Public Affairs, U.S. Department of State, December 2004, at [www.state.gov/m/rm/rls/perfrpt/](http://www.state.gov/m/rm/rls/perfrpt/); Powell's *State Department*, p. 5; and Jones, p. 10.

16. Jones, pp. 6-7; U.S. Department of State, *Department of State Results Report*, August 9, 2004, at [www.state.gov/documents/organization/35059.pdf](http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/35059.pdf), pp. 14-15.

17. Jones, p. 7; U.S. Department of State, *Department of State Results Report*, August 9, 2004, at [www.state.gov/documents/organization/35059.pdf](http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/35059.pdf), pp. 15.

18. Carlos Pascual, "Strengthening U.S. Reconstruction and Stabilization Capabilities," Washington, DC: Woodrow Wilson Center, October 20, 2004, at [State.gov/s/crs/rls/rm/37430.htm](http://State.gov/s/crs/rls/rm/37430.htm); Fact Sheet, Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization, U.S. Department of State, Washington, DC, March 11, 2005, at [www.state.gov/s/crs/rls/rm/43327.htm](http://www.state.gov/s/crs/rls/rm/43327.htm); Carlos Pascual, "Stabilization and Reconstruction: Building Peace in a Hostile Environment," Statement to the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, Washington, DC, June 16, 2005, at [www.state.gov/s/crs/rls/rm/48643.htm](http://www.state.gov/s/crs/rls/rm/48643.htm).

19. Dennis Rondinelli and John D. Montgomery, "Does the U.S. Need a Nation-Building Agency?" *Foreign Service Journal*, December 2004, pp. 56-60; Marcia Wong, "Conflict Transformation: The Nexus Between State Weakness and The Global War on Terror," Remarks at the 17th Annual NDIA SO/LIC Symposium, Crystal City, VA, March 13, 2006, at [www.state.gov/s/crs/rls/rm/63540.htm](http://www.state.gov/s/crs/rls/rm/63540.htm).

20. Wong.

21. George Gedda, "An Interview with Director General W. Robert Pearson," *Foreign Service Journal*, Vol. 83, No. 6, pp. 48-55.

22. Office of the Spokesman, U.S. Department of State, "President Issues Directive to Improve the United States' Capacity to Manage Reconstruction and Stabilization Efforts," Fact Sheet, December 13, 2005; "Military Support for Stability, Security, Transition, and Reconstruction (SSTR) Operations," Department of Defense Directive 3000.05, Department of Defense, November 28, 2005; Warren Hoge, "U.N. Commission to Assist Nations Recovering From Wars," *New York Times*, December 21, 2005, sec. A, p. 13. The Peacebuilding Commission will have 31 members. Seven will come from the Security Council, including the five permanent members—the United States, United Kingdom, France, Russia, and China. Another seven will be from the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), elected from regional groups; five top contributors to the UN budget; and five top providers of military personnel and civilian police to UN missions. The General Assembly will elect seven additional members, with special consideration for States that have experienced post-conflict recovery. The Assembly will review the Commission's work annually.

23. Condoleezza Rice, "Transformational Diplomacy: Remarks at Georgetown School of Foreign Service," January 18, 2006, at [www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2006/59306.htm](http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2006/59306.htm).

24. Rice, "Transformational Diplomacy"; Stephen Krasner, "Transformational Diplomacy," Remarks to Center for Global Development, Washington, DC, January 20, 2006, at [cgdev.org/content/calendar/detail/5723/](http://cgdev.org/content/calendar/detail/5723/); See J. Anthony Holmes, "Transformational Diplomacy Takes Shape But Basic Questions Remain," *Foreign Service Journal*, Vol. 83, No. 2, February 2006.

25. The POLADs are senior State Department officers, flag-rank equivalent, detailed as personal advisors to senior U.S. military leaders/commanders to provide expert policy support regarding the diplomatic and political aspects of their military responsibilities. There are currently 18 POLADs assigned to U.S. and NATO military organizations. The State-DOD Officer Exchange Program (PM/SDE) has operated since 1960 to further cooperation between State and Defense. At present, 11 State officers (0-6 equivalent) are serving in the Pentagon in the Office of the Secretary of Defense and on the Joint Staff under this

program. On the role of Political Advisors (now called Foreign Policy Advisors), see the chapter by John Finney and Alphonse La Porta.

26. For critical views of the Transformational Diplomacy Initiative, see Dennis Jett, "Style over Substance," *The Chicago Tribune*, February 5, 2006, Section 2, p. 1; Pat Holt, "The Risks of Proactive U.S. Diplomacy," *The Christian Science Monitor*, March 2, 2006, p. 9; and Walter La Feber, "Why Condi Rice's Foreign Policy Approach is Wrong," *The History News Network*, June 3, 2006, at [hnn.us/articles/22427.html](http://hnn.us/articles/22427.html).

27. U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Human Resources, *Diplomatic Readiness: The Human Resources Strategy*, August 2002.

28. J. Anthony Holmes, "Budget Crisis Redux: Have We Really Learned Anything?" *Foreign Service Journal*, Vol. 83, No. 1, January 2006.

**CHAPTER 7**

**INTEGRATING NATIONAL SECURITY  
STRATEGY  
AT THE OPERATIONAL LEVEL:  
THE ROLE OF STATE DEPARTMENT POLITICAL  
ADVISORS**

**John D. Finney  
and  
Alphonse F. La Porta**

**Introduction: Back to the Future?**

The commitment to “Transformational Diplomacy” of the Department of State is a policy innovation reflected in the Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) issued in February 2006<sup>1</sup> and the National Security Strategy (NSS) issued a month later.<sup>2</sup> Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice vested the Department’s reputation, organization, and policy priorities to shift personnel from lower priority functions and countries to those in which there are acute political-military challenges and public diplomacy needs; and to promote democratic ideals and the Bush administration’s democratization objectives.<sup>3</sup>

Transformational Diplomacy in the political-military context—whether defined as the union of traditional State Department diplomatic objectives with national defense and security interests or as “working the seam” between the traditional diplomatic and military spheres—is further enshrined in the initiative of Assistant Secretary of State for Political Affairs John Hillen’s effort to enlarge the political advisor (POLAD) function. Hillen projects a model for integration of



political-military advice at military headquarters from the combatant command (COCOM) level down to operational units. He would also deploy experienced career Foreign Service Officers as POLADs to joint task forces and other task groups when they occur, whether for peacekeeping, peacemaking or disaster mitigation. The Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) in Afghanistan and Iraq are priority assignment opportunities for Foreign Service Officers at the lowest operational level.<sup>4</sup>

This evolution of the Political Advisor function has echoes of the past, particularly in the Civil Operations and Revolutionary (later Rural) Development and Support (CORDS) program in the Vietnam conflict.<sup>5</sup> It also signals a major redeployment of effort to difficult geographic regions and along the conflict continuum (pre-combat, combat and post-combat). POLADS can contribute in important operational ways to the conduct of military operations, including deliberative planning, crisis management, the development and oversight of combat rules of engagement, and military operations at each level of organization from low intensity warfare to major combat. This operational role constitutes the special “added value” of Foreign Service Officers, including those of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and other disciplines.

Applying diplomatic experience to the interface between military operations and the political aspects of national security is instinctive and evolutionary. It draws on the strengths of both integrative political-military and purely military responsibilities in wartime and peacetime. But the success, or lack thereof, of integrated diplomatic and military functions is highly situational, personality-driven and skills-dependent. Preparation for involvement in military planning and

operations does not occur naturally in the Foreign Service culture and the experience of most diplomats. Individual experiential differences also apply to the Department of State as a whole; as argued by journalist Robert D. Kaplan, “for a worldwide fight against terrorism to be effective, the State Department must become not only as bureaucratically dynamic as the American military, but also as fully integrated with it down to the small unit level.”<sup>6</sup>

This article explores the POLAD function as it has developed largely since World War II, the role of the POLAD in an increasingly integrated national security system, the increased role for civilian diplomats and specialists in military operations, and the promise that transfiguration and reinvigoration of this function can hold for the future. To some, the greater involvement of the Foreign Service as individuals and institutionally represents a “premium” for the execution of United States national security policy in terms of interagency effectiveness.<sup>7</sup>

### **The Murphy Inception.**

History provides widely mixed lessons regarding relationships between diplomats and force commanders, revealing that true examples of the “diplomat-warrior” are few indeed. During the first foreign and defense crisis of the new republic, the First Barbary War of 1801-05, President James Madison appointed James L. Cathcart as peace commissioner to Tripoli. Following his expulsion by the ruling pasha, Cathcart accompanied the U.S. Navy’s punitive squadron. The four subsequent diplomats assigned to Mediterranean naval squadrons had mixed success, but later Nicholas Trist became the best known diplomatic agent for

his exploits in Mexico with General Winfield Scott. Ignoring Washington, Trist negotiated the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo that ceded California and New Mexico to the United States.

Robert Murphy is credited with being the first modern POLAD to a senior U.S. military commander. His role with allied commander General Dwight D. Eisenhower in French North Africa in 1942-43 and his subsequent service in war-ravaged Europe maximized Murphy's personal experience as a diplomatic practitioner, utilizing his formidable foreign language ability, intercultural skills, and area knowledge. Empowered personally by President Franklin D. Roosevelt, Murphy bypassed the State Department in fulfilling his mandate to provide "civil" diplomatic advice to a combatant commander. As detailed in *Diplomat Among Warriors*,<sup>8</sup> he became the quintessential diplomat-warrior in providing expertise relating to military operations negotiations (for example, with the Vichy government) that the commanders did not possess. Later translated to the post-war situation as advisor to the U.S. High Commissioner for Germany, Murphy provided local knowledge and language acumen that could not be matched by the military.

The lessons drawn from Murphy's service in World War II were that "ground truth" took many forms, including language fluency and political, diplomatic, and economic knowledge. It was also clear that Murphy earned the "trust and confidence" of Eisenhower and his other uniformed superiors—a trait that remains central to POLAD effectiveness.<sup>9</sup>

Beginning in the early 1950s, diplomatic advisors gradually began to be assigned to major military commands and expeditionary operations to provide the unique skills typified by Murphy. Some of these

assignments were formal tours of duty, while others were temporary “details” to the maturing defense bureaucracy and occasionally to military commands. There was recognition on the Washington policy level, however, that the diplomatic and military interface was an essential component of national security policy implementation. Generally speaking, political advisors to military commanders have been effective when their roles and mandates have been clearly articulated, and, most importantly, when diplomatic envoys and commanders have been temperamentally able to co-exist.<sup>10</sup>

In more contemporary examples, in 1964 President Lyndon B. Johnson appointed General Maxwell D. Taylor as U.S. Ambassador in Saigon. He was given a role in command and control of the military effort. Nevertheless, he and his successors, Ambassadors Henry Cabot Lodge and Ellsworth Bunker, deferred to General William Westmoreland as the resident military commander on military matters. Because Bunker, in particular, “saw his role strictly in diplomatic terms, he tended to support, rather than direct the efforts of the military commander.”<sup>11</sup>

Similar institutional lines were apparent in the 1989 Panama intervention when there was close engagement of the State Department’s special representative and later Ambassador Deane Hinton with Generals Frederick Woerner and Maxwell Thurman. Less conspicuous examples were Japan and Korea where, despite the assignment of POLADs, General Douglas MacArthur wielded supreme power; and in Laos (1965-73) where successive envoys, notably Ambassador William Sullivan, energetically opposed military plans and operations.<sup>12</sup>

The sense of history in Foreign Service experience is often lacking, as “lessons learned” often are not conveyed or consciously translated into State’s corporate knowledge. One exception was Operation IRAQI FREEDOM in 2003-04 where a deliberate effort was made by the Association of Diplomatic Studies and Training to conduct oral history interviews of U.S. civilian personnel returning from short tours of duty in Baghdad.<sup>13</sup> Of importance in the diplomatic-military interface is the distinction between Foreign Service Officers integrated into military commands, i.e., those serving as advisors to or working in the headquarters of a U.S. commander, and chiefs of mission (ambassadors) who are in the civilian chain of command of the Secretary of State in Washington. The latter often have broader policy interests vis-à-vis the host country or regional entities, including U.S. alliance relationships. Nevertheless, the lesson remains that, when military-civil relationships work well on the operational level, U.S. national objectives can be achieved in a smoother fashion and that outcomes, negotiated or otherwise, more acceptable to Washington can be achieved.

### **POLADs in the National Security System.**

POLADs are not a large cog in the wheel of the national security system, nor are they officially recognized in policy-level “wiring diagrams.” However, as Robert D. Kaplan argues persuasively in a recent book, the stepped-up tempo of military operations since the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 (9/11), has brought the utility and experience of diplomatic advisors into sharper focus.<sup>14</sup> Indeed, Kaplan and some other commentators foresee the continued blending of military and civilian functions,

especially in field operations in low intensity warfare scenarios, as commissioned and noncommissioned officers perform civilian-type roles in civil affairs, humanitarian relief, and reconstruction. The debate over the traditional military and civilian roles has been the subject of sharp debate, but is now clarified at least for the moment in the 2006 QDR that forecasts a greater union of operational functions, not only in post-conflict situations.<sup>15</sup>

Central to the effectiveness of a civilian POLAD assigned to a military headquarters, combat command, or lower echelon are the tiered relationships with his or her commander within the headquarters in relation to the J-staff directors and others such as the deputy commander, legal advisor, or staff director; between the POLAD and Washington agencies (valued as “reach back” into the national security bureaucracy); with higher echelons (for example, Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe [SHAPE] in Mons and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization [NATO] secretariat in Brussels); and among policy actors—whether U.S., allied, or multinational—in terms of shared issues and interests. In other words, the challenge of the individual POLAD is to be able to form and prosecute relationships up and down the military and civilian chains of commands as well as laterally with kindred headquarters, diplomatic missions, international organizations, and civilian entities, including nongovernmental organizations.

Hence a principal POLAD contribution can be to promote integration and synergy by bringing diplomatic-political and military-security considerations together for the consideration of the combatant commander (COCOM) working with bureaucratic forces to ensure all factors and avenues of approach are considered,

suggesting new or revised courses of action, and contributing advice and expertise regarding the execution of military operations, sensitive intelligence, and counterterrorist activities, as well as military support for essentially civilian policy objectives.

Concomitantly, POLADs can assist a combatant commander to achieve operational objectives and shape military operations in a variety of ways. While this is dependent on the character of and empowerment by the commander, the POLAD can help translate the local environment into operational ground truth and can facilitate the conduct of operations on the ground through negotiation, facilitating allied and indigenous contacts, and providing access to local actors and institutions. Examples of the operational effectiveness of POLADs abound in the southern Balkans in the 1990s and the years following where they have been central in the understanding by successive U.S. and allied commands of the military and civil annexes of the Dayton Accords of 1995, the complex operations of the High Commission in Bosnia, the United Nations (UN) role in Kosovo, and local government characteristics in Croatia, Macedonia, and Albania. Diplomatic skills thus have been integral to the conduct of U.S. and NATO stability operations and, to a great degree, the military support of U.S., European Union (EU), and UN efforts to create viable governmental entities, security structures, and political-economic development. The different kinds of relationships that are integral to the POLAD function follow in the next section.

### **The Military Actors.**

Of critical importance is the significantly expanded role of the regional combat command flowing from the Goldwater-Nichols Defense Reorganization Act of

1986.<sup>16</sup> Goldwater-Nichols shifted power and responsibilities from the military services to regional commands so that, it was argued, they could better address regional contingencies. COCOMs (then titled commanders-in-chief, or CINCs) were assigned the majority of general purpose forces in the expectation that most conflicts would be fought within regional theaters and functional commands. The latter included the Special Operations Command (SOCOM), established by the Goldwater-Nichols Act, which controlled the Special Forces of all services. In most cases, the specialized commands had narrowly circumscribed roles.

Larger defense budgets, deeper staffs, increased resources for engagement within and outside the customary ambit of the Department of Defense (DoD), including relations with the Congress, coupled with the prestige of the CINCs as “supreme” regional commanders, conferred on the combatant commanders a natural proconsul role. The regional commander’s ability to look across the region, the regional headquarters’ capability for networking among foreign military and civilian leaders—something only Assistant Secretaries of State can do on the policy level in Washington—endow the regional combatant commanders with the tools needed to promote U.S. cooperation with foreign powers on a regional and subregional basis.

Regular command involvement in regional affairs through conferences, contingency planning, theater security cooperation, counterterrorism strategy, counterproliferation measures, and increasingly measures to combat transnational crime, have been some of the tools used to pursue U.S. regional security objectives beyond the application of military power.



With their robust intelligence analysis, logistics, and and communications assets not available to any other regional actor, the regional commands exceed the capabilities of any other U.S. military organization and most other overseas agencies, except perhaps the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA).

Beginning in 2002, the Bush administration and Secretary Donald Rumsfeld reemphasized civilian control over the military and sought to diminish “CINC-ness,” ostensibly to give the President and Defense Secretary a greater range of military options to respond to political, counterterrorism, and military contingencies. New commands, including the Northern Command (NORTHCOM), were created, and several functional commands were strengthened, including the Strategic Command (STRATCOM) and Special Operations Command (SOCOM). While the regional focus of former “CINC-doms” was adjusted, others were given responsibility for *global* missions that cut across regional boundaries, thus altering the balance between the military services as force providers and the combatant commands as force employers.<sup>17</sup>

Insofar as the POLAD function was concerned, these changes opened up additional opportunities, especially since 9/11, for State Department personnel to be assigned as advisors to functional and operational commands. The market for political-military and diplomatic skills has expanded.<sup>18</sup>

### **The Civilian-Diplomatic Side.**

U.S. Chiefs of Mission and Country Teams, representing all agencies at a diplomatic post, are bilaterally focused. It is difficult for most ambassadors to exert influence regionally or outside the borders

of the national state they are accredited to. Under National Security Decision Directive 38 during the Johnson administration, the Ambassador was given the policy lead within her or his country as designated by the President. The dramatic expansion of the U.S. diplomatic and non-State Department presence abroad has meant that this authority is less and less honored as regional, cross-border, and transnational issues, including those of DoD and the combatant commands, increasingly predominate.<sup>19</sup> Current defense planning entailing the creation of a standing Interagency Task Force (IATF) structure, Interagency Crisis Planning Teams under National Security Council (NSC) aegis, and increased formalization of task force operations in crisis and combat areas would further militate against country- and country-team centered consideration and influence.<sup>20</sup>

State Department diplomatic missions and many government agencies represented in Country Teams often are underresourced. Damaging budget reductions during the Clinton administration resulted not only in post closings (some of which were well-deserved), but also in severe program reductions for development assistance, public diplomacy (exacerbated by the absorption into State of the U.S. Information Agency in 1996), and other assets for the conduct of foreign relations. Prior to the Clinton administration's and Congress' reaping of the "peace dividend" following the fall of the Soviet Union in 1989, the decline in State Department resources and overseas staffing had already begun when Secretary of State James Baker decided that the resources for opening 13 new diplomatic posts in the former Soviet Union would come from existing resources, thus stretching already thin staffs and budgets for the developing regions of the world all the more thinly.

Embassies often are meagerly staffed and lack resources for adequate political and economic coverage, significant or “surge” planning efforts, and information technology and communications technological capabilities. Consequently, Chiefs of Mission have few tools and little discretion, other than development aid and military assistance, to use in gaining influence or promoting U.S. objectives. Even in those areas where resources can be leveraged, Chiefs of Mission must work through other agencies, such as USAID, the regional military command, and DoD, with their lengthy and complex bureaucratic and congressional appropriations approval processes.

Ambassadors as a rule seek to maintain good relations with regional commanders. The letter of instruction from the President, coupled with NSDD 38, spells out what Washington considers the proper relationship, including channels to resolve program issues and policy disagreements. For many ambassadors, the regional commanders and their staffs often are more accessible than the State Department regional assistant secretaries. Washington principals are consumed with the headlines of the day and high profile issues, such as China relations and North Korea in East Asia, that tend to monopolize the time and attention of policy officials and the upper echelon of the State Department. At the same time, Country Team effectiveness depends on the quality of the Chief of Mission’s leadership, whether she or he has the inclination to use the Country Team as the principal mechanism for coordinating policy inputs and implementation, and whether a Country Team is able to act as a cohesive group. The degree to which external actors, whether in the regional military commands or in Washington, are consulted and involved in country matters is also largely dependent on the inclination of the Chief of Mission.

The circle of regional and extra-regional actors is also expanding. Multilateral and regional organizations can have an important impact on the regional commands as well as on diplomatic missions and country programs. In Europe, for example, NATO, EU, Organization of Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), and varying layers of top level consultative mechanisms, such as the Group of 8 (G-8), increasingly impact on and limit the scope of bilateral diplomatic missions. Regional and global programs in the security realm, such as the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI), operated from Washington, also limit the policy scope and shape the operational agendas of embassies, Country Teams, and sometimes the combatant commands.

At the regional level, the establishment of Joint Interagency Coordinating Groups (JIACGs) stemmed from Secretary Rumsfeld's tasking in December 2001 to four combatant commands and three functional commands to develop campaign plans in their respective areas of operation for post-9/11 counterterrorist actions that incorporated "all elements of national power." This concept of integration of interagency effort, subsumed under the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT), was subsequently refined and articulated in QDR doctrine in February 2006. It was also DoD's attempt to equip key commanders with enhanced planning capabilities for the "long war" against terrorism. As a new institutional actor, JIACG performance has been mixed, often dependent upon personality of those assigned to it and the willingness of agencies, including the CIA and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) as well as the State Department, to cooperate. Nevertheless, the JIACGs represent a step forward in terms of integration of intelligence and anti-terrorism effort against identifiable objectives

and targets.<sup>21</sup> Meanwhile, in the conventional law enforcement field, the regional commands work through the JIATF (Joint Interagency Task Force) mechanism.

The downside of the creation of integrated regional operational teams and task forces is that the interests of diplomatic missions and Country Teams are further subordinated to regional mechanisms in which Chiefs of Mission do not participate as policy voices. In the political-military realm, however, JIACGs should complement work of POLADs at the joint staff level. As POLADs serve their individual commanders, they should also exercise general oversight over the sensitive intelligence and counterterrorism matters falling within JIACG responsibility in order to provide a broad regional picture and to help in bridging U.S. agency, regional, and multilateral interests. One option, which could intrude on the fundamental POLAD-Commander relationship, would be to make the POLAD “operational” by making her/him concurrently chief of the command’s JIACG.

### **POLADs within State.**

The standing and treatment of POLADs within the State Department since Murphy’s time has been uneven at best and often neglectful. As in the case of POLAD standing and influence in the regional commands, the role and effectiveness of POLADs within State has mostly depended on personalities and personal relationships rather than their hierarchical placement or policy functionality. In general, there is little awareness within State at the assistant secretary level and above of POLAD activities and their potential for improving the operational interface with the combatant commanders

and defense policymakers. Likewise, the role and effectiveness of the POLAD “twins” in the political-military milieu—the State-Defense Exchange Officers (SDEs) serving in DoD—have been underappreciated and underutilized.

Part of this general climate of unawareness stems from the failure to incorporate lessons learned from past positive experiences and a general unconcern for the Department’s own institutional history. For example, the CORDS experience in Vietnam is only dimly remembered and more as a name than as a body of knowledge to be applied to today’s situation. One consequence is that the State Department tends, like any bureaucracy, to “reinvent” solutions and approaches to apply in current conflict and post-conflict situations, such as Iraq and Afghanistan, not to mention Haiti and elsewhere. The criticism is also correct that there is no codified doctrine in the State Department bureaucracy and culture pertaining to POLAD operations.

The responsibility for POLAD assignment and support falls to the Bureau of Political-Military Affairs (PM), although in some assignments to POLAD positions the responsibility is “shared” depending on which bureau “owns” the position. Either way as a practical matter, both PM and the relevant regional bureau have to agree on a POLAD assignment as well as the terms and conditions, such as logistical support. The question of where individual POLAD positions are found in regional bureaus or PM staffing patterns is not an incidental matter since occasionally POLAD management becomes the object of “turf” battles between bureau fiefdoms. PM support, assignment, and occasionally the effectiveness of individual POLADs have been scrutinized in internal State Department inspections and various reform studies of State’s role

in the national security system. One such analysis, the *State 2000* report, at the beginning of the Clinton administration in 1992 observed:

Future U.S. military action abroad is most likely to involve relatively small local conflicts and to be in the context of a UN or other multilateral peacekeeping process. Consequently, political and diplomatic factors are likely to be even more important than in the past in U.S. military operations abroad, and the role of the State Department political advisers (POLADs) assigned to the military commands will be more critical. The Department must be certain that it assigns outstanding officers as POLADs.<sup>22</sup>

Meanwhile, diplomatic and political realities increasingly have led the combatant commanders and their policy backstops in the Joint Staff in Washington into the unfamiliar and uncharted territory of political-military relations. The thickening web of policy interrelationships has been vividly described by Pentagon analyst Thomas Barnett in two pointed studies, *The Pentagon's New Map* and *Blueprint for Action*.<sup>23</sup> Even more than in the immediate post-World War II period, the interplay of military operations and political forces has affected how regional commanders view and use intelligence, develop integrated planning processes, and adopt “transformational” innovations such as consequence management, effects-based planning, combined and joint operations doctrine, and the like. Today’s complex demands require combatant commanders, whether in domestic or overseas theaters, to devote more attention to the political and diplomatic dimensions of their command responsibilities and to become more cognizant of the politico-economic “landscape” in their areas of operations. The bottom line, as reflected the current QDR<sup>24</sup> and increasingly

in public comment, is that the better commanders are also better diplomats.<sup>25</sup>

Yet the operational demands and impacts on the combatant commands are not fully appreciated in the State Department bureaucracy. In some cases regional command perspectives do not mesh with State's culture, which is almost exclusively more focused on the civil-political-diplomatic side, both bilateral and multilateral, than on uses of combined state power entailing the integration of civil and military forces and their underlying factors. This "cultural divide" has tended to substantiate the view in the national security bureaucracy that State is more focused on "national interests" and diplomatic "hand holding" rather than DoD's priority of "national security." Moreover, repeated public accusations that the State Department and Foreign Service are not focused on *United States* national interests, as distinct from "getting along" with overseas clients, testifies to this basic cultural difference.

The State Department's transformation toward the integration of policy and state power is overdue. Many important efforts at reform of the State Department and foreign policy formulation have been stillborn<sup>26</sup> or have been only been halfheartedly applied, such as recommendations flowing from *State 2000*, cited above, and the State Department's response to the Clinton administration's "Reinventing Government" initiative.<sup>27</sup>

In the 2006 environment, to become truly relevant to national security policy demands through Secretary Rice's Transformational Diplomacy initiative, there must be unqualified support within the State bureaucracy of the "long war" concept, the need for integrated military-civil operations, a coherent



approach toward post-conflict stabilization and reconstruction, and melding the instruments of “soft power,” including humanitarian assistance, civil society development, civil administration, the rule of law, and community development, into as seamless an operational approach as possible.

### **Essence of the POLAD Function.**

Enter the diplomat-warrior. In a prescient article published in 2003, retired Ambassador Howard K. Walker, then vice president of the National Defense University, wrote:

A new type of leader will be required to manage . . . crises in the 21st century: I call these hybrids soldier-diplomats and diplomat-warriors. They are soldiers who can also think like diplomats and diplomats who can think like soldiers. It is important for soldier-diplomats to understand why and how diplomacy operates to win international support and how domestic political considerations constrain the way force is used to achieve military objectives. Diplomat-warriors will need to understand and appreciate why and how the military can be used to achieve diplomatic objectives and what operational constraints the military faces in trying to achieve those objectives.<sup>28</sup>

Although Walker’s prescription was to stress cross-training for both military and Foreign Service officers, the archetypal diplomat-warrior is the POLAD who has the capacity to shape, on a daily and closely personal basis, the interests, attitudes, and actions of a regional combatant commander, or in the case of State-Defense Exchange Officers, the senior Pentagon official whom she or he advises. Moreover, according to Walker, “. . . the military does a better job of educating senior military

officers about the constraints on military operations, than does State in educating senior diplomats about military operations' constraints on diplomatic courses of action."<sup>29</sup>

As observed earlier, the essence of the POLAD function is the relationship between a commander and his or her political-diplomatic advisor. Often POLADs are the token civilians in a military command. They are the most prominent and ordinarily the most senior civilian, if they carry ambassadorial rank. Civilian representatives of the CIA and other agencies found in regional commands for the most part are barely overt or obvious and lack the breadth and influence of a POLAD. A POLAD's effectiveness is not only a matter of personality, rank, and agency affiliation, but also devolves on shared interests and the commander's view of the diplomatic function. A combatant commander, who has good political instincts comes from a social science background or has Washington policy experience, quite often has a better record in dealing with her or his POLAD and the interplay of political and military forces than others with a more technocratic or strictly warfighting background, although it is true that command experience on whatever level is an important equalizer.

Furthermore, staff organization and military cultural factors also can play a part. Some commanders' staffs are closed shops, rooted in tradition or daily routines, leaving little daylight for POLAD interests, concerns, and advice. Thus the POLAD's personal expertise and talents play a strong role. To the extent that the depth and breadth of a POLAD's experience can shine through the weight of day-to-day operational concerns, an individual diplomat-warrior can be highly effective.

Most important at the combatant command level, including multinational headquarters, is rank. In a strict hierarchy, ambassadorial rank denotes influence, an identifiable place in the headquarters pecking order, and entitlements like housing, transportation, and security that come with a POLAD position. Some Foreign Service Officers assigned as POLADs have used the title of Minister, if they have not previously served as a chief of mission; this is usually their personal title under the Foreign Service's "rank-in-man" concept which confers rank descriptors on senior officers. However, title and rank over time tend to become less important than the immediate access a POLAD enjoys to the commander, as personal competence, personality, operational adeptness, and local knowledge become main factors in an individual POLAD's effectiveness.

Staffing is also important to POLAD effectiveness in headquarters operations. In large commands, including multinational headquarters, military officers often are assigned to assist the POLAD, and there are supporting staff, communications and information systems support, and budgets for logistical and other aspects of POLAD operations. This is not always the case, however, in field commands or subordinate headquarters where POLADs literally may find themselves "on their own." POLAD effectiveness requires at least minimal support staff and preferably the assistance of one or more staff officers who can operate in the political-military interface.

Operational understanding and effectiveness are determinants of success at all command levels. While not allowing that some military officers may have acquired "civilian" skills prior to or in relation to their professional careers, Walker diagnoses the diplomatic "skill sets" as follows:

Unlike military men and women, diplomats are already trained in the “social science” of international relations, international conflicts, the framework of international organizations, how international alliances and coalitions operate, negotiating techniques and working in a multicultural setting. They are versed in mastering the art of the possible and accept that many international problems can only be managed, never solved.<sup>30</sup>

A keen intellect, powerful analytical and negotiating skills, good writing ability, regional and country experience, and language facility are necessary for POLADs. POLADs also have to be skillful bureaucratic influencers, work with others to make things happen, and immerse themselves in the work of the headquarters. In short, there is a demand for professionalism of the best type that the State Department can provide. Moreover, in the thicket of military and command politics, POLADs must make their own way carefully and with tact and discretion. There is no room for “kiss and tell,” violating confidences, or being seen to be less than 100 percent supportive of one’s commander.

Overall, the hackneyed phrase “trust and confidence” sums up the positive commander-POLAD relationship. The moral authority and influence of a POLAD depends wholly on the value a commander attaches to her or him on a personal level and to the diplomatic advisory function.

### **Back Home and Out There.**

External relationships are also instrumental in POLAD effectiveness. A civilian diplomat has self-evident limitations: POLADs have no troops at their

disposal and headquarters largess is sparingly doled out and fought for. Moreover, military prerogatives are jealously safeguarded against encroachment by *civilians* or another agency. Fortunately the power of persuasion is usually something Foreign Service Officers are good at; arguably persuasion is a POLAD's most important weapon.

Add to this creativity and resourcefulness, getting a few good staff people, adopting (not *adapting*) military characteristics such as loyalty to their troops, and being a strong advocate for his or her commander. POLAD effectiveness also depends on professional performance: giving commanders and staffs the right insights, often determined through honed instinct; proving one's utility through the written word and reporting privately to one's commander ("gisting" is most useful); serving as a conduit back to multiple agencies and bureaus in Washington; the ability to quickly reach out to ambassadors, embassies, and Washington actors; and developing new sources of information for the commander. Helping a commander to gain as much "360 degree vision" as possible is important in many commands, beyond the staple tasks of advising on local customs and quirks, protocol, personalities, and things that come naturally to most POLADs after 20 or so years of Foreign Service experience.

The ability to foster healthy relationships between COCOMs, both on the commander's personal level and for their staffs, with diplomatic missions and multinational-multilateral organizations is a positive POLAD added value. Building confidence in two-way communications and relationships is a quintessential diplomatic attribute that tends to serve the interest of most combatant commanders and senior Defense Department officials.

Equally significant are relationships “back home” in terms of the military command’s access and information-gathering. POLADs not only can provide “grease” to make relationships work or to open new doors, but also they can be useful conduits of substantive information, analysis and policy actions. The importance of Information (with a capital “I”) cannot be underrated in the U.S. bureaucratic milieu. The State Department’s Political-Military Bureau, for example, stepped squarely into the interagency information void by providing, as a service to POLADs as well as Washington decisionmakers, twice-daily briefs of all-source intelligence, policy decisions, and weekly reports of the department’s political-military bureaus (known as the “T family” presided over by the Under Secretary for Arms Control and International Security Affairs). This gave POLADs, their staffs, and their commanders access to important policy information and allowed them to track information and implementing actions relating to post-9/11 operations. Realizing the value of access to such high level and often comprehensive information, a good POLAD takes extra pains to keep her or his commander well informed of the Washington policy and operational drift from the standpoint of State Department actors.

Other aspects of Washington relations affecting POLADs and integration of the political-military functions have not been so fortuitous, however. Prior to 9/11 in the opening year of the Bush administration, bureaucratic warfare erupted between State and Defense over the desire of Secretary Rumsfeld to severely limit the number of State Department officers serving in the Pentagon and the number of military officers serving in “civilian” roles in State, the National Security Council staff, and elsewhere. Hard negotiations

occurred over much of a year on a new State-DOD agreement on POLAD and SDE assignments on a more constrained basis. There is still room for improvement in bilateral agency understanding on the terms and conditions of such assignments.<sup>31</sup>

On the whole, however, Washington actors will react positively if they think they have something to gain by greater interaction with combatant commanders in terms of operational information, trolling for substantive ideas and options, or alternative ways of getting information to or from a regional command. State's bureaucratic response (for reasons of "culture," it can be argued) has often been idiosyncratic and fluctuating. During the first Bush administration, and especially after 9/11, the value placed on the POLAD function skyrocketed under PM Assistant Secretary Lincoln Bloomfield and his principal deputy, Gregory Suchan, who were strongly committed to improve State's performance in support of military operations in Afghanistan, Iraq and the wider "Global War on Terror." Some innovations, such as the Political-Military Action Team operational reporting effort noted above, have survived, but POLAD support office operations were downplayed under a subsequent deputy assistant secretary.

On the downside, POLAD support normally suffers when there is pressure on State Department or PM bureau budgets. Unwillingness to adapt the assignment system to give greater priority to POLAD assignments, as well as to eliminate time-consuming paperwork, has impaired State's role in this aspect of interagency operations. Moreover, State has had no system of tracking officers who held political-military positions at home and abroad so that a pool of experienced officers could be identified for upcoming

POLAD and military task force assignments. And State has not valued the POLAD function in the Foreign Service promotion process. As Louise Crane, vice president of the American Foreign Service Association (AFSA), observed: "Don't take any of those diplomat-in residence slots, be an adviser to a military command, or go on detail to the Hill or another government agency (except to the National Security Council), because your chances for performance pay for doing so were nil in 2004."<sup>32</sup>

In short, there was a clear recognition within the political-military community that, in light of post-9/11 demands and especially the post-conflict situation in Iraq, not to mention continuing worldwide terrorist threats, State was falling far short of the need for improved policy and operational integration and had to do a much better and more consistent job.

### **Diplomatic Transformation.**

At the time Condoleezza Rice was named as Secretary of State in December 2004, relations between State and Defense had sunk to an all-time low because of bitterness surrounding the control and conduct of Iraq policy and operations. It was also evident that diplomatic support of military operations had to be improved in the national interest, not only as a matter of bureaucratic willingness. To his credit, Secretary of State Colin Powell had begun a budgetary and human resource "build back" after disastrous reductions under the Clinton administration. Over 700 positions were restored to the Foreign Service, and new needs were identified in support of the post-conflict situations in Afghanistan and Iraq, such as the Provincial Reconstruction Teams, which sought to some extent



to emulate the CORDS experience in Vietnam. (For additional details, see the Chapter 6 by Louis Nigro.)

Dr. John Hillen, incoming Assistant Secretary of the Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, in mid-2005 grasped the possibilities to create a new model for State-Defense relations predicated on:

- blurring of the “political-military divide” in policy formulation, military and civil deployments, hostilities, and post conflict situations;
- recognition that conflicts and national security challenges generally are more political than military, and nonmilitary capabilities often are decisive;
- the need for integrating all elements of national power by shifting from military combined operations to “multiagency combined actions”; and,
- a realization that civil actors not only include State, but also USAID, domestic agencies (e.g., Treasury), and law enforcement agencies.<sup>33</sup>

The QDR of February 2006, furthermore, addresses the urgency of defining models for integrated military-civilian operations along a continuum of conflict management, supported by the creation of a cadre of National Security Officers (NSOs) of senior civilian and military professionals to respond to higher national security interests. Planning guidance henceforth would establish priorities, stipulate roles and responsibilities, and generate resources and personnel on an interagency basis among the combatant commands, the Joint Staff, the Office of the Secretary of Defense and other actors.<sup>34</sup>

Hillen envisages an expansion, at least doubling, of the current POLAD and State-Defense Exchange positions to include not only combatant commands and military services as at present, but also deployed joint task forces (JTFs), numbered naval fleets, humanitarian task forces, reconstruction teams in Afghanistan and Iraq, and in support of other military operations. Meanwhile, the State Department's Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stability (S/CRS), which arose in 2004 from the ashes of military-civilian rivalry over Iraq reconstruction, primarily addresses civilian planning and response to post-conflict situations, as distinct from providing continuing advice to and engagement with military commands, except when its personnel are deployed in a conflict area.<sup>35</sup> POLAD and other support to combatant commands, and other military organizations as specified above, continue to be the responsibility of the PM bureau headed by Dr. Hillen. Hence there is a role for both expert crisis intervention in pre-conflict planning and post-conflict operations, but the diplomatic advisory function with the combatant commanders remains throughout.

As enunciated by Secretary Rice in early 2006 at Georgetown University, effective change will have to start with transformation of the State Department: more streamlined ways of doing business, how personnel assignments to political-military positions (including POLADs, PRTs, and others) are made, the realignment of budgetary priorities in support of military operations and national security objectives, and acknowledgment at top echelons of the Department of the need for integrated political-diplomatic-security policy and implementation. To the extent that these objectives are also translated into the delivery of development

assistance by USAID, public diplomacy programs, and democracy-building, the transformation effort will be successful.

Despite the initial successes of Powell's Diplomatic Readiness Initiative, State is hobbled in Congress—and to some extent within the Office of Management and Budget (OMB)—in competing for new budgetary resources. The request for \$250 million in fiscal year 2006 support for S/CRS was zeroed out in the appropriations process, but by executive decision DoD will provide \$100 million in stopgap funding for S/CRS. Some State officials, including Dr. Hillen, point to the need for State to obtain additional funding for POLAD and other positions from Defense. However, serious questions persist about State's budget viability and dependence on DoD for the funding of political-military positions.

In the security assistance field as well, DoD now has independent funding for security assistance (the so-called "Section 1206" provision) for developing country military capabilities outside the foreign military financing (FMF) and international military education and training (IMET) appropriated to the State Department under the Foreign Assistance Act. Overall, however, the outlook is not favorable for "meaningful levels" of additional funding "within the constraints of a static to slightly expanding budget," despite the receptivity to transformation goals within the Department of State.<sup>36</sup>

Internally within State, there should be serious and sustained support of the POLAD function by PM and the geographic bureaus which have policy oversight of the regional commands and all U.S. policy and operational matters within their areas of responsibility. Specific measures to enhance State's role as propounded by

Secretary Rice and Dr. Hillen would include:

- More personnel resources under “Diplomatic Transformation” to staff new POLAD positions.
- Identification and training of a cadre of political-military officers to staff new positions and meet other requirements in addition to JIACG and other integrated civil-military assignments.
- More expeditious and better matches in assignments and reducing paperwork in the nomination and assignment process for POLAD, SDE, and other positions.
- Raising POLAD visibility among top State decisionmakers to develop a constituency for “seamless” joint interagency operations, including post-conflict reconstruction.
- Priority recognition for service as POLADs in the promotion precepts, the annual instructions given to Foreign Service selection boards.
- Revising the restrictive State-Defense agreement on the interagency exchange of personnel, increasing the number of officers moving in each direction, expanding training opportunities for Foreign Service Officers in NDU and other military schools, and clarifying support cost arrangements.
- Establishing new POLAD positions in DoD regional institutes, especially the Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies (APCSS), the African Strategic Studies Center, and the new Middle East center, while reallocating some State-Defense Exchange positions to higher priority operational areas within DoD and the Joint Staff.
- Improved Political Advisor support to com-

batant commands and other headquarters, including the provision of administrative staff, facilities and communications, by both military commands and embassies.

- Creation of a data bank, increased utilization of “short tours” which are defined in State Department practice as less than a “full” tour of 2 or 3 years.
- The easing of hiring restrictions on experienced retired officers, most importantly removing the salary cap permanently for State Department retirees.<sup>37</sup>

A key element of the expansion of POLAD capabilities is training. Not only should specific training courses be initiated for POLADs and political-military officers beyond the current 3-day “tradecraft” orientation, a full-fledged training center should be established within the Foreign Service Institute (FSI) to train State Department, other civilians, and military officers for the “long war” by providing language, history, political, economic, and cultural instruction for conflict and stability operations. The center’s course of study should also include war games and simulations, training in formulating military plans, and instruction in multiagency operations and command relationships. This center can become a repository of lessons learned and best practices for the civilian side of government, including USAID and others. Ambassador Howard Walker advocates an increase in State senior officer participation in the National Defense University’s CAPSTONE seminars for rising flag officers “who will soon hold key operations jobs. Some ‘operations thinking’ would rub off, and invaluable personal relationships and personal credibility would be established.”<sup>38</sup>

To enhance the integration of policy implementation through commands at all levels, better and more uniform understanding of POLAD functions and job requirements is required by State Department decisionmakers, POLAD candidates, military commanders, and their immediate staffs. Job descriptions for POLADs should be codified, and combatant commanders and senior Defense officials should be encouraged to jointly agree with their POLADs on performance objectives and benchmarks. Criteria for the recruitment and assignment of individual POLADs should also be developed within State and to focus commanders on standard POLAD qualifications and job priorities.

### **National Security Officers – An Opportunity?**

Deserving examination within the POLAD context is the concept of establishing a National Security Officer corps as provided in QDR 2006.<sup>39</sup> The concept for the formation of a corps of dedicated experts in multiagency security operations and post-conflict situations, including diplomatic, law enforcement, civil administration, democratization, and other “nation building” skills, offers possibilities for both the State Department and the POLAD function. POLADs should be included as a recognized specialty within the NSO corps, recognizing that the Foreign Service, which encompasses USAID, Foreign Agricultural Service, and Foreign Commercial Service officers as well as State Department personnel, are, in fact, the personification of what is sought in an NSO. It must be recognized that foreign service skills are learned through practical experience and training over the span of a career. Varied diplomatic, country, and regional

expertise is best learned and honed within a foreign service career, not simply acquired through training or from the outside looking in.

Resource availability for enlargement of the POLAD function under the NSO umbrella would be an obvious attraction in view of constrained State Department budgets and lack of support for the State Department in the congressional appropriations process. Funding, however, should not be the sole factor driving State's response to the NSO initiative. State's budget authority, as perennially proposed in national security and State Department reform initiatives, should be shifted to the 050 National Security function rather than remain in the so-called 150 Account with the Commerce and Justice departments and the science agencies. State has been resource-starved in many other respects, but cogent arguments can be made that, through the NSO program or in other ways, budgetary autonomy for State's contributions to integrated national security operations, including the POLAD function, should be ensured.

As part of State's diplomatic transformation, the NSO initiative and its relationship with the POLAD function must become a joint responsibility of the Under Secretary for Political Affairs ("P") and the Under Secretary for Arms Control and International Security Affairs ("T"). The Under Secretary for Political Affairs has the broad institutional perspective for policy development and is normally involved in top level national security decisionmaking, while the Under Secretary for Arms Control and International Security oversees the Political-Military Bureau in which the POLAD function is lodged as well as other State elements for civil-diplomatic support of military-security operations, including nuclear and other

nonproliferation measures. An argument also can be made for a greater role for the Under Secretary of Political Affairs in the POLAD function, particularly improving the assignment process to elevate the integrative civil-military operational support role in State's policy structure and giving direction to management and financial officials as well as the Director-General of the Foreign Service who presides over the Foreign and Civil Service personnel systems.

There are other far-reaching implications for the Department of State flowing from the current QDR. In *Beyond Goldwater-Nichols: U.S. Government and Defense Reform for a New Strategic Era*, Clark Murdock and Michele Fluornoy propose that the National Security Council take a direct role in policy coordination *overseas* by convening regional "summits" of military, diplomatic, and intelligence officials. These would undoubtedly be seen as a move to further dilute State Department and chief of mission authority.<sup>40</sup> Similarly, institution of an interagency task force (IATF) system on the Washington level and under the combatant commanders would further centralize intelligence, law enforcement, and regional security policy formulation—but again without a direct voice for the State Department and diplomatic missions.

Formal reservations are emerging about expanded authorities for DoD in antiterrorism, special military operations, and regional security initiatives. According to one defense commentator:

Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice stated her department's concerns much more bluntly during a videoconference linking Bush's top aides in mid-January [2006]. Letting the Pentagon operate outside the U.S. ambassador's control to roll up extremist networks in foreign countries would make U.S. policy "almost



exclusively kinetic”—that is, warlike—she argued, to Rumsfeld’s discomfort, according to a briefing given to colleagues by one official involved in the meeting.<sup>41</sup>

Whether such initiatives leading to a “militarization” of diplomatic and civilian activity would be effective in the long run is open to question, although short-term gains could result in promoting policy synergy and integrated operations in overseas environments.

There are also “spillover” impacts to be considered. As the integration of U.S. civilian-diplomatic and military operations proceeds, whether in conflict situations or not, there is a case to be made for exporting the model to allied countries. According to one commentator, “If we accept that modern security requirements (read WOT) necessitate diplomatic transfiguration, . . . it is but a short step to acknowledging that the WOT is an international effort. . . . The U[nited] K[ingdom] is a case in point, and the MOD [Ministry of Defense] and FCO [Foreign and Commonwealth Office] could benefit from paying attention to the U.S. model. . . . why not coordinate an approach from the outset?”<sup>42</sup>

### **Future Directions.**

Optimal POLAD contributions to national security policy implementation are to (a) promote integration on the combatant command level, and (b) contribute to the operational effectiveness of commands and institutions in which POLADs serve. In the civil-political-diplomatic world where imprecision and ambiguity often are the norm, POLADs can facilitate important relationships (for example, between commanders and diplomatic missions), serve as a conduit for communications among military and civilian U.S. Government

stakeholders, and help to craft more synergistic, comprehensive, and nuanced approaches to influence events, apply military resources, and achieve discrete national security objectives.

Equally important are the roles of POLADs on the operational level, and sometimes even the tactical level and in Provincial Reconstruction Teams, to enhance military effectiveness on the ground in stabilization, post-conflict and contingency operations. There is no substitute for diplomatic skill in pursuing the complex operations being experienced and envisaged in the post-9/11 environment, increasingly multi- (or non-) polar world, and shifting balances in global “soft power,” economics, natural resource utilization and trade. The days of exclusive “military” and “civilian” spheres of operation are over. Everything is interconnected under the broad rubric of U.S. national security interests.

It is the view of the authors that the State Department cannot fail to rise to the challenges of the rapidly complex international environment and the self-professed goals of Diplomatic Transformation. Without top-level management drive, and most importantly the resources to match capabilities to rhetoric, it is difficult to see a change for the better in the civil-military operational integration and closer engagement with military commands and deployed forces.

## ENDNOTES - CHAPTER 7

1. U.S. Department of Defense, *Quadrennial Defense Review*, February 26, 2006, pp. 86-87.

2. George W. Bush, *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America*, White House, March 2006, pp. 33-34, 44-46.

3. Condoleezza Rice, "Transformational Diplomacy," speech, Georgetown University, January 18, 2006.

4. John Hillen, "The Changing Nature of the Political-Military Interface," speech, Garmisch, Germany, November 30, 2005.

5. Robert M. Cassidy, "Back to the Street Without Joy: Counter-Insurgency Lessons from Vietnam and Other Small Wars," *Parameters*, Summer 2004, p. 2.

6. Robert D. Kaplan, "Send in the State Department," *New York Times*, February 21, 2006, p. A19.

7. A legitimate consideration in this context is the applicability or implications of U.S. interagency integration on our close allies in NATO and Asia. National synergy of effort in political-military affairs should be mirrored, in the ideal world, in integrated operations with U.S. allies as is now occurring in Afghanistan and in reconstruction teams in both Afghanistan and Iraq.

8. Robert Daniel Murphy, *Diplomat Among Warriors*, London, UK: Collins, 1964.

9. The testimony of a contemporary military commander, General James Gavin, highlights Murphy's independence of the State Department:

In an interview I had with Ambassador Robert Murphy in December 1975, he told me of a conversation he had with President Roosevelt earlier when President Roosevelt told him to report directly to him. Murphy pointed out that, as he was an officer of the State Department, it would put him in a difficult position. President Roosevelt replied, 'Don't worry, I'll take care of Cordell,' referring to Secretary of State Cordell Hull.

Quoted in James Gavin, *On to Berlin: Battles of An Airborne Commander, 1943-1946*, New York: Viking, 1978, p. 316. There is no evidence, however, that Murphy abused his privilege of reporting to the President and maintaining relations with the Department of State.

10. Office of the Historian, U.S. Department of State, "Commanders and Ambassadors: The Historical Experience," Washington, DC, January 23, 2004, p. 1.

11. *Ibid*, p. 3.

12. *Ibid*, pp. 4, 7-9.

13. This work was done under a grant from the United States Institute of Peace.

14. Robert D. Kaplan, *Imperial Grunts: The American Military on the Ground*, New York: Random House, 2005.

15. *Quadrennial Defense Review*, pp. 1-7.

16. For an explanation of the role of the regional commanders, formerly commanders in chief (CINCs), now combatant commanders, see Dana Priest, *The Mission: Waging War and Keeping Peace with America's Military*, New York: Norton, chapter 3.

17. Christopher Lamb, *Transforming Defense*, Washington, DC: National Defense University Press, September 25, 2005, pp. 21-22.

18. As of September 2006, POLADs are assigned in 18 commands: Chief of Staff, U.S. Army, Washington, DC; Chief of Naval Operations, Washington, DC; Commandant, U.S. Marine Corps, Washington, DC; Chief of Staff, U.S. Air Force, Washington, DC; National Guard Bureau, Washington, DC; Pacific Command (USPACOM), Hawaii; Central Command (USCENTCOM), Florida; Northern Command (USNORTHCOM), Colorado; Southern Command (USSOUTHCOM), Florida; European Command (USEUCOM), Germany; Special Operations Command (USSOCOM), Florida; Strategic Command (USSTRATCOM), Nebraska; Transportation Command (USTRANSCOM), Illinois; Joint Forces Command/Allied Command Transformation (USJFCOM/ACT), Virginia; Supreme Allied Command Europe (SACEUR), NATO, Belgium; Joint Forces Command Naples (JFCN), Italy; Joint Forces Command Brunssum, NATO, Netherlands; Combined Forces Command (CFC-A), Afghanistan; Combined Joint Task Force Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA), Djibouti.

A further nine Department of State officers are assigned to State-Defense Exchange (SDE) positions in DoD and officers are assigned as Faculty Advisors (FACADs) in the war colleges and National Defense University. These constitute the State-Defense Exchange or POLAD “family” under the State Department Bureau of Political-Military Affairs. Also see below, pp. 10-11.

19. See Chapter 6 by Louis Nigro, Jr.

20. Clark A. Murdock and Michele A. Flournoy, *Beyond Goldwater-Nichols: U.S. Government and Defense Reform for a New Strategic Era*, Washington, DC: Center for Strategic and International Studies, July 2005, pp. 45-53.

21. *Quadrennial Defense Review*, pp. 19-24.

22. U.S. Department of State, *State 2000: A New Model for Managing Foreign Affairs*, Washington, DC, 1992, p. 212.

23. Thomas P. M. Barnett, *The Pentagon’s New Map: War and Peace in the Twenty-First Century*, New York: Putnam, 2004; and *Blueprint for Action: A Future Worth Creating*, New York: Putnam, 2005.

24. *Quadrennial Defense Review*, pp. 30-31.

25. Greg Mills, “General David Richards: A Commander for Afghanistan,” *International Herald Tribune*, May 26, 2006, accessed October 3, 2006, at [www.ihf.com/articles/2006/05/26/opinion/edmills.php](http://www.ihf.com/articles/2006/05/26/opinion/edmills.php).

26. One good example is the Hart-Rudman Commission, whose recommendations at the beginning of the George W. Bush administration fell on deaf ears. See U.S. Commission on National Security/21st Century, *Road Map for National Security: Imperative for Change*, Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, January 31, 2001, pp. 52-63, 94-96.

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## CHAPTER 8

### SEDUCED AND ABANDONED: STRATEGIC INFORMATION AND THE NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL PROCESS

**William P. Kiehl**

Truth also needs propaganda.

— Karl Jaspers,  
German philosopher

## INTRODUCTION

Strategic information is a term that cries out for definition. Strategic information is: (1) civilian public diplomacy currently conducted principally by the U.S. Department of State, and by other civilian agencies in a supporting role, e.g., the Broadcasting Board of Governors for international broadcasting, the Agency for International Development (AID) in civil affairs and developmental tasks (many AID programs in democracy building and AID training programs have an obvious public diplomacy link or provide opportunities for public diplomacy); and (2) military psychological operations and peacetime information operations with aims and methodology compatible with civilian public diplomacy, such as Civil Affairs, the International Military Education and Training (IMET) program, and the expanded IMET (e-IMET) program.

Strategic information may also have a clandestine component and utilize grey or black propaganda where the source of information is either masked or falsified. This latter form is used by intelligence agencies but is



not used by civilian public diplomacy or peacetime military psychological operations.

## **PUBLIC DIPLOMACY DEFINED**

Civilian public diplomacy has evolved from its first use in 1965 by Dean Edward Gullion of the Fletcher School at Tufts University, when he coined the term to refer mainly to nongovernmental actions and people-to-people programs or what is often now termed “citizen diplomacy.” By the 1970s, however, public diplomacy came to mean the U.S. Government’s informational, educational and cultural exchange activities abroad. The classic definition of public diplomacy is attributed to the U.S. Information Agency and is still the preferred definition in the United States. Accordingly, “public diplomacy seeks to promote the national interest and the national security of the United States through understanding, informing, and influencing foreign publics and broadening dialogue between American citizens and institutions and their counterparts abroad.”<sup>1</sup>

Peacetime public diplomacy of this form was already in use as early as 1938, when Nelson Rockefeller’s Office of Inter-American Affairs embarked upon an ambitious educational and cultural exchange program with Latin America to blunt actual and potential Nazi and fascist influence.<sup>2</sup>

World War II and the creation of the Office of War Information (OWI), the Voice of America (VOA), and the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) provided broad additional means for civilian-directed public diplomacy. At the same time, the War Department and the uniformed services honed under British tutorage psychological operations and other military information operations skills.

## **THE TOYS OF WAR**

Following the war, as is the U.S. custom, the “toys of war” were put aside in peacetime. In a practical sense, this meant the demobilization and deactivation of most of the American civilian and military capability of waging a “war of ideas.” The Office of War Information, which also had significant domestic information coordination functions as well as its more documented foreign propaganda activities, was dismantled immediately upon the conclusion of hostilities. The remnants of OWI’s overseas operations were deposited in the Department of State where they remained until 1953. The Voice of America was continued, albeit with much reduced resources.<sup>3</sup> The OSS evolved into the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) in 1947 and retained a capability for clandestine influence measures and black propaganda. The peacetime military placed “psyops” and other information operations firmly on the back burner.

## **THE NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL**

### **The Beginning of the National Security Council Process.**

With the passage of the National Security Act and the creation of the National Security Council (NSC) with Public Law 80-253 of July 26, 1947, the national security process began in the Harry Truman administration.<sup>4</sup> Continuing the World War II interagency cooperation and coordination begun by the State-War-Navy Coordinating Committee established in 1944 at the Assistant Secretary level and at the Secretary level in

1945, the NSC attempted to give institutional stability to national security policymaking. The NSC was under the chairmanship of the President, with the Secretaries of State and Defense as its key members. Other original members included the Secretaries of the Army, Navy, and Air Force, and the Chairman of the National Security Resources Board. The President could designate representatives of other executive agencies to attend meetings. The CIA reported to the NSC, but the Director of Central Intelligence was not a member; he attended meetings as an observer and adviser. The stated function of the NSC was to advise the President on the integration of domestic, foreign, and military policies relating to national security and to facilitate interagency cooperation. This vastly significant legislation also created the position of Secretary of Defense, the National Military Establishment, the CIA, and the National Security Resources Board.<sup>5</sup> Despite the preponderance of military members, during the Truman administration the NSC was dominated by the Department of State. State's Policy Planning Staff drafted most NSC papers for discussion, approval, and dissemination.<sup>6</sup>

From the beginning, strategic information was reinvented to the table. An early National Security Council document, NSC-4 entitled "Coordination of Foreign Information Measures," brought strategic information in all of its forms to the forefront. The document reads in part:

NSC 4

Washington, December 17, 1947

## REPORT BY THE NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL ON COORDINATION OF FOREIGN INFORMATION MEASURES

### The Problem

1. To determine what steps are required to strengthen and coordinate all foreign information measures of the U.S. government in furtherance of the attainment of U.S. national objectives.

### Analysis

2. The USSR is conducting an intensive propaganda Campaign directed primarily against the U.S. and is employing coordinated psychological, political and economic measures designed to undermine non-Communist elements in all countries. The ultimate objective of this campaign is not merely to undermine the prestige of the U.S. and the effectiveness of its national policy but to weaken and divide world public opinion to a point where effective opposition to Soviet designs is no longer attainable by political, economic or military means. . . .

3. The U.S. is not now employing strong, coordinated information measures to counter this propaganda campaign or to further the attainment of its national objectives.

4. None of the existing departments or agencies of the U.S. Government is now charged with responsibility for coordinating foreign information measures in furtherance of the attainment of U.S. national objectives.

### Conclusions

6. The present world situation requires the immediate strengthening and coordination of all foreign information measures of the U.S. Government designed to influence attitudes in foreign countries in a direction favorable to the attainment of its objectives and to counteract effects of anti-U.S. propaganda.<sup>7</sup>

The Memorandum goes on to charge the Secretary of State with responsibility to formulate policies and coordinate all information measures designed to influence attitudes in foreign countries. The Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs was delegated to exercise these functions for the Secretary, and he would be assisted by an interagency staff.

In a separate Memorandum, NSC-4-A entitled "Psychological Operations," the NSC notes that there are two related but separate purposes, i.e., (1) to ensure that all overt foreign information activities are effectively coordinated, and (2) to initiate steps looking toward the conduct of covert psychological operations. NSC-4 dealt with overt methods and a separate document, a directive to the Director of Central Intelligence, dealt with the covert operations and established formal institutionalization of covert operations.<sup>8</sup> Perhaps the most famous of these forays was CIA's covert support to The Congress for Cultural Freedom, established in 1950 which once had offices or representatives in some 35 countries.<sup>9</sup>

In 1951, the Psychological Strategy Board made up of the Deputy Secretary of State, the Deputy Secretary of Defense, and the Director of Central Intelligence was created to coordinate a U.S. response to unconventional Soviet tactics. The Board worked closely with the NSC in managing both overt and covert counteroperations.<sup>10</sup>

### **The U.S. Information Agency and the National Security Council.**

By 1953, psychological and influence operations were considered sufficiently indispensable to the conduct of foreign relations that a new entity was created which assumed the mantle for civilian overseas

information, and cultural and educational exchanges activities authorized under the Information and Cultural Exchanges Act (Public Law 402 of January 27, 1948), also known as the Smith-Mundt Act. These activities had previously been carried out by the Department of State.<sup>11</sup> In addition to these duties, the new agency, the U.S. Information Agency (USIA), was charged with responsibility for the Voice of America, which eventually moved from its New York studios to Washington, DC. The Dwight Eisenhower administration, already well-disposed to what would later come to be called “public diplomacy” as an effective tool in the “war of ideas” against the Soviet Union, not only brought the USIA into existence but also codified the mission of the new agency in NSC Document number 165/1.<sup>12</sup> The Agency’s mission remained virtually unchanged until its demise in 1999.

In recent years, there has been a belated recognition that public diplomacy is an essential element in the conduct of foreign relations. Essential it is, but it is not the “silver bullet” or panacea that some pundits might claim. Indeed, no one can claim that public diplomacy in its many forms can solve America’s relationship problems.

## **LOCALIZED PUBLIC DIPLOMACY**

A myth worth exploring is the notion that public diplomacy works best when centrally planned and focused on a single message or set of messages. Those that believe this myth would have us believe that nothing worthwhile in public diplomacy happens without Washington’s direction.

Anyone who has worked in public diplomacy abroad—"in the field"—is aware of how important on-the-ground experience and sensitivity to the local milieu is to successful public diplomacy. Successful public diplomacy campaigns are rarely "invented" in Washington. Indeed, most of the "brilliant" ideas from inside the Beltway are at best marginally successful in an overseas context. They too often presuppose a cookie cutter approach to the world with a one-size-fits-all policy line to which the hapless public diplomats abroad are expected to tow.

If there is one concept that seems to elude the political masters of the Washington bureaucracy, it is that in public diplomacy it is all about *context*. Thus a skilled practitioner of public diplomacy must find a way to take the "flavor of the month" cooked up by Washington and make it palatable to key contacts in the host country. The public diplomacy officer must find a way to place the message in a context that is both understandable and reasonable (if not likeable) to the target audience.

Three examples of localized public diplomacy which, in the language of the old USIA was "field driven" public diplomacy, illustrate what is meant by "localized" public diplomacy. The examples are illustrative of countless public diplomacy campaigns over the past half century that originated in the field rather than in the Washington bureaucracy, despite the national security systems' jealously guarded hold on power.

The first takes place in communist Czechoslovakia in the late 1970s and early 80s, the second in Finland in the late 1980s, and the third in Thailand in the late 1990s. There is nothing inherently more profound about these three choices versus the many other examples of field-driven public diplomacy. They are all vignettes

from this writer's own public diplomacy career and thus may be verified in their authenticity.<sup>13</sup>

### **Czechoslovakia.**

In the waning days of World War II, as the Red Army raced westward to Berlin and the Western allies moved up the boot of Italy and across France to the Rhine, Czechoslovakia, especially Bohemia, became one of the last redoubts of the Nazis. Both the Russians and the Americans moved to eliminate this potential hold-out. General George Patton's Third Army moved aggressively into western Bohemia, and for a time it appeared that he would be the first to enter Prague and liberate that city. The communist-dominated partisans in Prague called for the Red Army to liberate the city, and thus Patton's army slowed and met up with the Red Army in the town of Rokycany just east of Plzen (Pilsen). At the end of the war then, American GIs occupied western and southern Bohemia, and the Red Army occupied the remainder of the country. As the Red Army was reluctant to leave, the GIs also stayed on until there was a mutual withdrawal in 1946. During that interval, the American GIs and the residents of western Bohemia seemed to have formed a close friendship. After the war, dozens of monuments were erected by local townspeople as tributes to their American liberators.

Following the Communist Party coup of February 1948, the regime wished to create the myth that it was the Red Army alone which liberated all of Czechoslovakia from fascism. Honoring the GIs was actively discouraged. After crushing the Prague Spring with a Russian-led Warsaw Pact occupation of Czechoslovakia in 1968, the authorities took more drastic measures. Ostensibly in "outrage" over



the Vietnam War, local officials had many of the monuments to American liberators removed and/or destroyed. But the memory remained.

In part to look into the history of the American liberation and in part as a cover for American military attachés' travel to border areas and districts of military interest, the Defense Attaché's Office at the American Embassy in Prague in the late 1970s began a series of automobile trips each May to the towns in western Bohemia liberated by the United States. A similar series of journeys was organized in November to visit crash sites and monuments to fallen U.S. airmen in Slovakia. Initially only Department of Defense (DoD) personnel made the journeys but in the early 1980s, other personnel from the Embassy, including U.S. Ambassador Jack Matlock joined the small motorcade to Bohemia in May each year. The visits to the sites where markers once stood and to the small towns and villages was very low key and attracted almost no notice, except for the ubiquitous *Statny Tanjy Bezpečnosti* (STB or State Secret Security) detail which shadowed the Americans. Where a monument remained, a small wreath "from the American people" was placed on the marker.

In May 1983, the newly arrived Public Affairs Officer (PAO) joined the motor trips in May and November and realized the potential that these events might have for the United States to remind the people of Czechoslovakia of the American role in their liberation from the Nazis and also the enduring interest and concern on the part of the United States for the oppressed people of this communist state. Beginning in 1984, the Embassy's May and November "wreath-layings" — as they came to be known — took on a higher profile and a different character. All embassy employees and their families were actively

encouraged to join the motorcades which now grew much larger, with up to two dozen vehicles moving in tandem through the back roads and byways of Bohemia. The dates and times of the “wreath-layings” were announced through the Czechoslovak Service of the Voice of America (VOA) – the most widely listened-to foreign radio station in Czechoslovakia, (known euphemistically as “Prague Three” by most Czechs who had two domestic networks). Radio Free Europe’s (RFE) Czech and Slovak Services also announced the events. The Public Affairs Office (aka The Press and Cultural Service) was able to obtain thousands of Czechoslovak-American crossed-flag lapel pins from the U.S. émigré organization, the Czechoslovak National Congress, VOA bumper stickers, lapel pins, ballpoint pens, and other “souvenirs” for distribution to well-wishers along the route.

By 1986, the Press and Cultural Service was printing special commemorative postcards by the thousands with a photo of GIs liberating Pilsen for mass distribution to the by now thousands of Czechs lining the route and participating in the ceremonies at each site. Wreaths from “the American people” were placed in each location where there had been a monument whether removed or not, and American Ambassador William Luers addressed large audiences in near-fluent Czech recalling the friendship between Americans and the people of Czechoslovakia. The STB observers were beside themselves. The crowds were too large to intimidate, and the secret police filming and taping the events were hardly a secret but were largely ignored by the crowds who often displayed American flags and other expressions of support. Detailed reports of the growing crowds and their enthusiasm were broadcast back to Czechoslovakia by the VOA and RFE.

This local initiative, from the early forays into the Bohemian countryside in the late 1970s and especially after 1984 brought the events to the level of a major public diplomacy program, proved to be a huge success. The program reinforced the belief among the people of Czechoslovakia that the United States and the West had not abandoned them and was actively demonstrating that fact through the series of “wreath-layings” around the country. After the successful Velvet Revolution in December 1989, which toppled the communist government, the May Embassy “wreath-layings” continued in 1990 and culminated in an event in Pilsen at the newly restored Liberation Monument in front of the city hall. More than 100,000 Czechs honored the American liberators of their city.

## **Finland.**

In 1638 a small band of Swedish colonists (the majority of whom happened to be Finns, then under the rule of the Kingdom of Sweden) founded New Sweden on the Delaware River, south of today’s Philadelphia. Nearly 350 years later, a rather low-key but well-organized effort commemorated this event in both Sweden and Finland. The two countries and the U.S. postal authorities had approved the issuance of stamps to mark the occasion in 1988 and various Swedish-American and Finish-American organization were making plans to commemorate the event on both sides of the Atlantic.

While studying the Finnish language and culture in preparation for his assignment beginning in July 1987, the future PAO learned about the 1988 anniversary, and it triggered a series of ideas and plans to increase the American profile in Finland and reinforce the positive feelings for the United States that existed

there. Recalling the slogan “America’s Bicentennial Salute to Sri Lanka” from an earlier assignment, the PAO recognized how successful it had been to bring all public diplomacy programs—the routine ones as well as those created just for the event—under a single banner as the PAO had done in Sri Lanka in 1976.

Using this formula as a model, the incoming PAO, in discussion with the Finnish Embassy in Washington and the USIA and Department of State, began to focus on 1988 as “The National Year of Friendship with Finland.” Upon arrival in Finland, he was able to convince Ambassador Rockwell Schnabel and the Country Team of the value of using this event to further U.S. public diplomacy goals in Finland. Within a few months, an elaborate program of the National Year of Friendship with Finland was announced and underway. A logo for the Finnish-American Year of Friendship was adopted by both the U.S. Embassy and the Finnish Foreign Ministry, and soon this logo was on everything from cultural presentations to educational exchanges to publications and special events. The U.S. Information Service alone listed some 38 separate programs in honor of the “Year of Friendship” which included an all-star program at the prestigious *Finlandia Hall* featuring a video address to the *Finlandia* audience (and the national TV audience) by President Ronald Reagan on the importance of the relationship between Finland and the United States over the 350 years since the first Finn set foot in the New World. The event also kicked off a 5-year \$5 million dollar fund-raising campaign to increase the number of Fulbright grantees between Finland and the United States. The “Year of Friendship” culminated in a visit to Finland by President Reagan, the first-ever by a sitting U.S. president.

Among the benefits of this elaborate program in cooperation with the Finnish Government was an increased favorability rating for the United States as a nation and for specific U.S. foreign policies as measured by public opinion polls. The high level of favorability proved to be important as Finland assumed the Presidency of the Security Council just prior to the Gulf War and played an important and positive role which supported U.S. positions. Shortly thereafter Finland bought its first-ever U.S. military aircraft when a major contract was awarded for the F-16. This era of good feeling between the United States and Finland continued as the Baltic states gained their freedom from the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) and the Soviet Union itself disintegrated shortly thereafter.

### **Thailand.**

The Thai economy was one of the fastest growing of the so-called Asian Tigers in the 1990s. Construction cranes (the national bird) were seen in every direction in Bangkok, which went from a charmingly sleazy backwater to New York on the Chao Priya River in less than a decade. Wooden houses were replaced by 60-story buildings, and tropical gardens in the capital and similar scenes could be seen in other urban centers throughout the country. Thailand became the Detroit of Asia as dozens of automobile brands were manufactured there for the Asian market and auto parts makers proliferated. But this house of cards was built on speculation and what came to be called "crony capitalism" with loose banking practices, slipshod securities laws, and massive corruption; and it was all about to come crashing down.

The U.S.-Thai relationship has had its ups and downs in the 156-year history of diplomatic relations. Essentially, the relationship in Thai eyes was a classic *pi-non* relationship, that is, an elder brother-younger brother relationship with the United States as the *pi* and Thailand as the *non*. It was the *pi*'s responsibility to look out for the *non*, to assist when needed, to protect and to guide the *non*. The *non*'s responsibility was to be loyal to the *pi* and to follow the *pi*'s lead. This *pi-non* relationship survived the military dictatorships in Thailand's post-war era, the Vietnam War, and American withdrawal from Southeast Asia and seemed unshakeable in July 1997.

Earlier in the year there had been "runs" on several international currencies by hedge fund operators, the most famous being George Soros' run on the British pound which netted him hundreds of millions of dollars in profit. In July 1997 it became the Thai *baht*'s turn to be attacked by currency traders, and it proved to be the beginning of a cascade of economic troubles that caused first the Thai *baht* to crumble, and then the Thai financial system to crash, and eventually the Thai economy to come tumbling down. A run on a country's currency can be overcome easily if the underlying fundamentals of the economy are sound. But in Thailand's case, the fundamentals were in a shambles thanks to the crony capitalism and corruption of the banking and securities sectors.

Thailand became the first of the Asian Tigers to fall, but it soon had company. Indonesia and then South Korea followed in Thailand's footsteps and for many of the same reasons. When the dust had settled, the Thai *baht* went from about 24 to the dollar to about 55 to the dollar. Thousands of workers in the financial sector were suddenly without a job when their banks and securities firms closed their doors.

This is essentially an economic story, but it relates to public diplomacy because at its heart is the *pi-non* relationship. When Thailand's economy crashed, it looked to the United States for help. But the U.S. Treasury Department, looking through the framework of economics, not public diplomacy, looked at Thailand and saw that it basically got what it deserved for not having its house in order. The State Department deferred to the Treasury in all things having to do with economics and finance. So the United States did nothing when Thailand's crash came. Puzzled and resentful, the Thai saw the United States as abandoning Thailand, and renouncing the *pi-non* relationship when the going got tough.

Newspaper editorials pointed to the United States as the cause of Thailand's woes. George Soros and other western currency traders were vilified, and by implication Western governments, especially the United States, were seen as responsible for the collapse throughout Asia. As if this was not bad enough, the U.S. Government decided that things were beginning to get out of hand in Asia and announced that it would bail out Indonesia and South Korea with billions of dollars in credit. This was like throwing gasoline on a fire in Thailand. The Thai media and influential Thais across the spectrum of society exploded in indignation. The United States would not help Thailand but would help Indonesia! Thailand was one of the five U.S. treaty allies in the Pacific, it was a functioning democracy, it was a loyal U.S. ally, and took its lead from the United States. Indonesia was none of these things—not a treaty ally nor even an informal ally, a dictatorship not a democracy; and Indonesia, more often than not, was at odds with the United States.

A major financial decision had been made in Washington without input from two important

sources—first, there was no consultation with regard to the public diplomacy dimension of this decision in any of the countries affected, and, second, there was no consultation with the Embassy in Bangkok which actually understood the situation in Thailand. Even before this unfortunate decision was made, the PAO had outlined a series of public diplomacy strategic and tactical measures to explain U.S. policy to the Thai and limit the damage to the relationship. Following the announcement about aid for Indonesia, Ambassador William Itoh and the Country Team met to develop an overall strategy to cope with this near rupture of the relationship.

Public diplomacy was a central part of the strategy, which also included convincing State and Treasury to reverse course and provide an aid package for Thailand at least proportional to the aid package proposed for other countries. DoD was called upon through the Defense Attaché's Office and the Joint U.S. Military Assistance Group to cancel an outstanding contract for F-16 aircraft and parts which would free up hundreds of millions of dollars for the Thai Government.

The U.S. Information Service's public diplomacy strategy focused on several fronts. Because of the crash of the Thai economy and currency, many of the 8,000 Thai students in American higher education were suddenly without the financial means to continue their education. For the United States, this meant well-publicized and immediate assistance from public and private sector sources to provide work-study and loan opportunities for Thai and other Asian students, and the Institute for International Education and American higher educational institutions took the lead. In addition, the Public Affairs Section proposed to Washington that a special high profile scholarship



program be established for 156 students selected by the Thai Government to attend U.S. universities for 3 years. The 156 was linked to the 156 years of diplomatic relations between the two countries, and the total funding for the scholarship program provided through Economic Assistance Funds and administered by AID came to about \$3 million. This is a tiny sum when compared to the \$4 billion in loan guarantees provided to Thailand or the nearly \$1 billion in debt cancelled by recalling the F-16 contract, but because it involved people, not hardware or loans, it registered with the Thai public as real help from America. Other smaller exchange programs were augmented too, like the Fulbright Program and other government-funded internships; but the 156 scholarships made the biggest headlines.

Determined to demonstrate that the United States was interested in Thailand, the Embassy encouraged as many high level visitors as possible to visit Bangkok. For its part, the U.S. Information Service used each of these cabinet level or equivalent visits to get the message out that the United States was interested in Thailand and would do whatever it could to ease the burden during a difficult economic time. Every high level visitor held a press conference and interviews with Thai media, made highly visible public appearances, and consistently expressed the deep concern of the United States for Thailand and the Thai people. It was a rare week in 1998 when a U.S. cabinet-level official, congressional delegation, or senior military officer did not visit Thailand with a full public diplomacy program.

Recognizing that there was a reservoir of good will in Thailand built up over many years and reinforced by the visit by U.S. President Bill Clinton in 1996, another

key component of the public diplomacy strategy focused on reaching out to the gatekeepers of information and the “influencers” in the society to make the case for the United States. The PAO arranged a series of lunches with key editorial boards and influential columnists to provide them with briefings on the complexities of international finance and currency speculation. U.S. Ambassador William Itoh, the fluent Thai-speaking Deputy Chief of Mission Ralph Boyce, the Embassy’s entire economic reporting section, and public diplomacy officers were all mobilized to this effort. In the end, it was Thai columnists, commentators, and editorial writers who put the Asian financial debacle in context and into the proper perspective for their readers, listeners, and viewers.

The United States emerged not as the villain it appeared to be when it ignored Thailand’s crisis but rather as the prime mover in rectifying a corrupt and mismanaged financial system in Thailand and in other Asian countries. This was seen as an act of responsibility worthy of the *pi*. Ironically, despite their own best efforts in aiding Thailand, it was Japan that was blamed for the instability in the Asian financial world because it continually postponed reforms to its own banking and financial sector. In opinion polling following the resolution of the financial crisis, the U.S. favorability level was nearly identical with the high mark it had reached immediately after the Clinton visit in 1996.

With this background on the reality of public diplomacy as it works in the field, we can return to the more complex battles for control of strategic information within the Washington bureaucracy and the National Security Council system.

## THE NSC AND INFORMATION

The NSC system evolved into the principal arm of the president in forming and executing military, international, and internal security policies in the Eisenhower administration.<sup>14</sup> President Eisenhower was more comfortable with the NSC concept than was Truman, and he created a highly structured system of integrated policy review based on the Cutler Report. This system was described as the “policy hill” process wherein drafts from the agencies moved up from the agency level through an NSC Planning Board for review and refinement before reaching the NSC for consideration. At that time, the NSC consisted of five statutory members: the President, Vice President, Secretaries of State and Defense, and the Director of the Office of Defense Mobilization. Depending on the subject matter for discussion, other Cabinet members and advisors including the Secretary of the Treasury, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the Director of Central Intelligence would participate. The President’s Special Assistant for National Security Affairs was a facilitator of the decisionmaking system, oversaw the recommendations coming up and down “the hill,” and briefed and summarized discussions but unlike National Security Advisors from the Kennedy administration to the present, had no substantive role in the process.

President Eisenhower created the Operations and Coordinating Board (OCB) to make sure that decisions taken by the NSC were followed-up. Meeting weekly at the Department of State, the OCB was composed of the Under-Secretary of State for Political Affairs (chair), the Deputy Secretary of Defense, the Directors of the CIA and the new U.S. Information Agency, Special

Assistants to the President for National Security Affairs and Security Operations Coordination. Some 40 interagency working groups reported to the OCB which had its own staff of 24 to support the working groups.<sup>15</sup>

The Eisenhower NSC provided regular, fully-staffed, interagency reviews of major national security issues which resulted in decisions at the highest level. Eisenhower himself was fully committed to the process and chaired 329 of the 366 NSC meetings that took place in his 8 years as President. While the NSC was in charge of the policy review process, the Department of State continued to exercise, under the strong hand of Secretary John Foster Dulles, full control over the day-to-day operations of foreign policy.<sup>16</sup>

The Eisenhower NSC system was sharply criticized, however, notably in the hearings conducted in 1960-61 by the Senate Subcommittee on National Policy Machinery (aka the Jackson Subcommittee), for being inflexible, overstaffed, unable to anticipate and react to immediate crises, and weighed down by committees. President Kennedy strongly agreed with the Jackson Subcommittee critique and immediately moved to cut the NSC staff and to simplify the foreign policymaking process, making it more intimate. The OCB was abolished, and the NSC no longer was required to monitor the implementation of policies. President Kennedy also installed McGeorge Bundy as the National Security Advisor, and the responsibilities and authorities of the NSC Advisor grew throughout the Kennedy years.<sup>17</sup>

In the realm of strategic information, this redefinition of the NSC and the abolition of the OCB took the wind out of the sails of the new Director of the USIA, the renowned CBS radio and TV newsman Edward R.

Murrow, who expected to wield considerable influence in the new administration. Murrow was unaware of the future diminished role of the NSC when he accepted the USIA position and was soon outflanked by some of his own subordinates with strong personal ties to the White House.<sup>18</sup>

Murrow found himself and his agency marginalized despite the fact that he was often invited to attend NSC meetings. The real decisionmaking lay elsewhere, leaving Murrow more visible but less influential than his predecessors under Eisenhower.

The NSC met less and less frequently and some of its activities were taken up by a more select body, the "Standing Group." By April 1963 the Standing Group was reconstituted with McGeorge Bundy as its chairman and a membership that included the Under-Secretary of State for Political Affairs, the Deputy Secretary of Defense, the Director of Central Intelligence, the Attorney General, the Chairman of the JCS, the Under Secretary of the Treasury, the Director of USIA, and the Administrator of AID.<sup>19</sup> Strategic communications, in the form of USIA, was back at the table at least at the operational level, but it was too late for the seriously ill Murrow, and the Kennedy years were nearing an end.

Lyndon Johnson had even less faith in the NSC process than his predecessor. He considered the NSC to be a "leaky sieve" and preferred small intimate groups for decisionmaking. Johnson's relationship with USIA and military information operations—and thus with strategic information—was defined and shaped almost entirely by the Vietnam War. Illustrative of the widened role for strategic information due to the war was Johnson's National Security Action Memorandum, No. 325<sup>20</sup> which responded to the USIA Director's

suggestions for an information strategy in Vietnam. It reads in part:

NATIONAL SECURITY ACTION MEMORANDUM NO. 325

TO: THE DIRECTOR, U. S. INFORMATION AGENCY

1. I have reviewed your memorandum of March 16 on the informational and psychological warfare programs in South Vietnam. With the exception noted in paragraph 5 [regarding Viet Cong defectors], I hereby give my general approval to the rapid and effective execution of the improvements you propose. This approval is subject to review and concurrence by Ambassador [Maxwell] Taylor . . . .

2. By copy of this memorandum I request the Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of State, the Director of Central Intelligence, and the Administrator of the Agency for International Development to give all possible support to an intensified information and psychological warfare program along the lines developed in your report.

3. By copy of this memorandum, I request the Director of the Bureau of the Budget to review with you and as necessary with other agencies the financial implications of such an intensified program and to make his recommendation to me as to the best way of meeting any additional costs.

4. Meanwhile you are directed to proceed with all necessary actions on the firm understanding that *it is my fixed policy that any worthwhile undertaking shall not be inhibited or delayed in any way by financial restrictions. We can and will find the resources we need for all good programs in Vietnam.* [Emphasis added]

Rarely does the strategic information function find itself in such an enviable position with the implication at least that there is a blank check for information and psychological operations.

The Richard Nixon National Security Council process was so dominated by Henry Kissinger, first as National Security Advisor, then as the dual-hatted NSC Advisor and Secretary of State, that strategic communication was a top-down decision no less than any other, and all decisions were made without reference to the NSC process.<sup>21</sup> The administration paid less and less attention to overseas strategic information and more and more attention to domestic information management as the Watergate crisis mounted.

The Ford administration brought Kissinger's deputy Brent Scowcroft in to replace him as NSC Advisor, bowing to congressional disapproval of having so much foreign policy power in the hands of a single individual. Kissinger continued as Secretary of State, and Scowcroft managed a cordial relationship with his former boss while instituting a more low-key NSC coordination role.<sup>22</sup> Strategic communication drifted as though on auto-pilot.

## INFORMATION BECOMES COMMUNICATION

President Jimmy Carter entered office with no particular design for strategic information but with the plan to merge the State Department's Cultural Exchanges Bureau (CU) into USIA and to soften the hard edge of "information" in the process.<sup>23</sup> Carter eliminated the word "information" from the foreign policy lexicon and replaced it with "communication."

Thus, the USIA was augmented by the addition of a reluctant partner (CU) to form the Educational and Cultural Affairs Bureau of the newly named International Communication Agency or USICA. USIA, the propaganda agency, was no more. But in field operations overseas, the USICA looked too much

like the *USCIA* for many people, an unfortunate error of judgment on Washington's part that caused no end of irritation for those implementing information, cultural, and educational programs at U.S. embassies and consulates overseas.

Jimmy Carter came into office determined to eliminate the abuses of the NSC system under Kissinger, and envisaged the role of the NSC to be one of policy coordination and research. The structure of the NSC was changed to ensure that the NSC Advisor would be but one of many advisors. Carter also reduced the staff by 50 percent, and reduced the number of standing committees from eight to two: a Policy Review Committee (PRC) usually chaired by a department, most often the State Department and the Special Coordinating Committee (SCC), always chaired by the NSC Advisor.<sup>24</sup>

The Carter NSC has been criticized for failing to monitor implementation of the President's policies. In addition, because there were no clearly developed foreign policy principles other than arms control (the prerogative of the SCC), the President frequently changed his mind depending on who offered advice last. Carter's informality complicated the decisionmaking process. Often no formal records of decisions were made, leading to indecision and embarrassment.<sup>25</sup>

As an example of the scant regard the Carter administration had for strategic information, when the new President's U.S. National Strategy was formulated and disseminated, not so much as a carbon copy of the document ever reached the *USICA*, but copies did go, in addition to the Vice President and the Secretaries of State and Defense, to the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, the Director of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, the Chairman of



the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the Director of Central Intelligence. The Top Secret Presidential Directive/NSC-18 set out the foreign policy priorities of the nation and the means to achieve them.<sup>26</sup> An examination of the now mainly unclassified document [passages relating to military strategy, policy, and practices are still redacted] reveals that among the means to achieve U.S. foreign policy priorities, there is no mention of any method of strategic information overt or covert, civilian or military. For Carter, strategic information just did not exist – after all, he had eliminated the word from the foreign policy lexicon in 1978.

## ZENITH OF STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION

If there is any certainty in the ways of Washington, it is that the pendulum always swings back. And the pendulum on strategic information swung back dramatically with the beginning of the presidency of Ronald Reagan. It is no exaggeration to state that the Reagan administration was the zenith of strategic communication. Reagan, “the great communicator” himself, knew the business of persuasion very well indeed. He chose as his Director of the USICA – hastily renamed the U.S. Information Agency – Charles Z. Wick, a close Hollywood confidant and family friend with constant and instant access to the President.<sup>27</sup>

A series of National Security Decision Directives increased and institutionalized the access, the power, and the scope of Wick’s agency and brought public diplomacy not only to the table of the NSC but to the very center of the foreign policy process. Five key NSC documents trace the growth of strategic information within the Reagan administration. They are NSDD 77, NSDD 130, NSDD 186, NSDD 266, and NSDD 276. All

five of the key documents have been declassified and are available through the Reagan Library, Simi Valley, California.<sup>28</sup>

In National Security Decision Directive Number 77 entitled "Management of Public Diplomacy Relative to National Security,"<sup>29</sup> the President states: "I have determined that it is necessary to strengthen the organization, planning, and coordination of the various aspects of public diplomacy of the U.S. Government relative to national security." NSDD 77 established a Special Planning Group (SPG) of the NSC under the chairmanship of the NSC Advisor and consisting of the Secretaries of State and Defense, the Director of the USIA, the Director of AID and the Assistant to the President for Communications. The role of the SPG was "to be responsible for the overall planning, direction, coordination, and monitoring of implementation of public diplomacy activities."<sup>30</sup>

Four interagency standing committees reporting to the SPG were established by NSDD 77. The committees would receive support from the NSC staff and periodic guidance from the SPG which would review their activities for proper implementation of policy and to determine resource priorities. The committees were:

- *The Public Affairs Committee*: Co-chaired by the Assistant to the President for Communications and the Deputy Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs. The committee was responsible for planning and coordinating U.S. Government public affairs activities relative to national security, e.g., major speeches on national security and public appearances by senior officials.
- *The International Information Committee*: Chaired by a senior representative of USIA; vice chaired by a senior representative of the State

Department. The committee was responsible for planning, coordinating, and implementing international information activities in support of U.S. policies and interests. The committee also was empowered to make recommendations and, as appropriate, direct the concerned agencies, interagency groups, and working groups with respect to information strategies in key policy areas.

- *The International Political Committee*: Chaired by a senior representative of the Department of State; vice-chaired by a senior representative of USIA. The committee was responsible for planning, coordinating, and implementing international political activities in support of U.S. policies and interests, including aid, training, and organizational support for foreign governments and private groups to encourage the growth of democratic political institutions and practices.
- *The International Broadcasting Committee*: Chaired by a representative of the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs. The committee was responsible for the planning and coordination of international broadcasting activities sponsored by the U. S. Government.

The next major addition to the institutional build-up of strategic information came with National Security Decision Directive Number 130, "U.S. International Information Policy." The Directive<sup>31</sup> calls international information an integral and vital part of U.S. national security policy and strategy and, along with other elements of public diplomacy, a key strategic instrument for shaping fundamental political and ideological trends. NSDD 130 cites a need for

sustained commitment to improving the quality and effectiveness of U.S. international information efforts, the level of resources devoted to them, and their coordination with other elements of national security policy and strategy. Of interest, the document also calls for a greater role for international information considerations in formulating policies.

The document addresses in some detail an international information strategy, including international radio broadcasting; other international information instruments such as publications, new technologies, cooperation with the private sector, overcoming barriers to communication; strategically targeted information and communications assistance to other nations; psychological factors in maintaining the confidence of allied governments and in deterring military action; and the capability by the armed forces to have an immediate and effective use of psychological operations in crisis and in wartime. Revitalization and full integration of psychological operations in military operations is declared to be an important priority for DoD. The NSDD concludes with a series of functional requirements related to international information and the approval of the establishment of the Foreign Opinion Research Advisory Group. In National Security Decision Directive 223, "Implementing the Geneva Exchanges Initiative," the "softer side" of public diplomacy became the subject of presidential attention. This directive,<sup>32</sup> following on the heels of the Reagan-Gorbachev Summit Meeting in Geneva in 1986 and the Geneva Exchanges Initiative, was aimed at enhancing bilateral cooperation at all levels; including through educational and student exchanges, people-to-people programs, media, and information exchanges, and consultations.

The President noted that he attached “high priority to the exchanges initiative” and requested all relevant U.S. Government agencies to give it a high priority also and “to render every possible assistance to implementation.” A new Interagency Group on the President’s Geneva Exchanges Initiatives was established, chaired by the NSC Senior Director for European and Soviet Affairs. A new Office of the Coordinator for the President’s U.S.-Soviet Exchanges Initiative was established at USIA to work with USIA and other agencies and the private sector to develop programs in the agreed areas and work on new initiatives. The remainder of the NSDD 223 detailed the duties and responsibilities of the coordinator and his relationship to existing offices and programs.

## **THE SPECIAL REVIEW BOARD**

The President’s Special Review Board (or the Tower Board chaired by Senator John Tower) submitted its Report to the President on February 26, 1987. In a nationwide address on March 4, President Reagan announced that he endorsed the Board’s recommendations and intended to go beyond them in rebuilding the NSC process to repair the damage done by the Iran-Contra Affair.

NSDD 266 details specific steps in implementing the Board’s recommendation and other reforms.<sup>33</sup> Much of the document goes beyond the scope of the current discussion and addresses the statutory responsibilities and membership of the NSC in some detail. The document must be seen in the perspective of the Iran-Contra hearings and the revelation of covert activities undertaken by staff of the NSC. Much of the document

addresses these issues. From the perspective of strategic information, however, the following passage in Section I. A., "Organizing for National Security," is relevant:

The Directors of the United States Arms Control and Disarmament Agency and United States Information Agency are special statutory advisors to the NSC. The Director of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency shall be the principal advisor to the President, the Secretary of State and the NSC on arms control and disarmament matters. *The Director of the United States Information Agency shall be the principal advisor to the President, the Secretary of State, and the NSC on international informational, educational, and cultural matters.* [Emphasis added]

The Directive goes on to spell out in detail the role of the National Security Advisor, the NSC staff, the NSC and the Interagency Process, including meetings, the process, covert action, use of nongovernment personnel, the intelligence process, and reporting. Among the directives is a prohibition on conduct of covert activities by NSC staff.

Continuing the damage control from the Iran-Contra Scandal, NSDD 276<sup>34</sup> provides additional detailed guidance on the "National Security Council Interagency Process." The President defines five groupings within the NSC process, defines their authority, membership, and prerogatives. The five are: (1) National Security Council, (2) National Security Planning Group (NSPG), (3) Senior Review Group (SRG), (4) The Policy Review Group (PRG), and (5) Other Interagency Groups. According to NSDD 276:

Within their respective areas of authority as set forth in NSDD 266, the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense, the Director of Central Intelligence, the Director

of the U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, and the Director of the USIA may approve the continuation of existing senior interagency groups to the extent necessary or desirable to promote an effective NSC process; by June 30, 1987, the National Security Advisor shall be notified of those interagency groups they have determined shall continue to function.<sup>35</sup>

## THE POST COLD WAR CHILL

In contrast to the Reagan years, President George H. W. Bush's NSC held itself aloof from strategic communication. Unlike the rare Reagan-Wick personal relationship, the President's relationships with USIA Director Gelb and later with Director Henry Catto were more in the norm and not based on long-term family friendships but on political relationships, and as such, were more distant. Charles Wick was the last USIA Director to enjoy instant access to the President.<sup>36</sup>

With a strong background in international affairs, CIA Director, UN Ambassador, Ambassador to China, and 8 years as Vice President, George H. W. Bush made wholesale changes to the NSC, even following the reforms in 1987.<sup>37</sup> President Bush's NSD-1<sup>38</sup> provided a new charter for the NSC, the Policy Review Group was enlarged to a Committee, the Deputy National Security Advisor named as chair of the Deputies Committee and a Principals Committee screened matters for the NSC. Eight Policy Coordinating Committees (PCCs) were formed to absorb regional and functional responsibilities.

Public Diplomacy was not shut out of the NSC process as it had been under President Jimmy Carter or marginalized to a lesser extent as in the Kennedy, Johnson, and Nixon administrations, but in contrast to the Eisenhower years, and especially the Reagan

administration, the influence of strategic information was weak.<sup>39</sup>

A blow to USIA came with the unexpected and sudden dissolution of the USSR in 1991 after releasing its grip on the Warsaw Pact with the end of the Berlin Wall and the beginning of the Velvet Revolution in Prague. The absence of “an enemy” created the absence of the long-time rationale for American public diplomacy, especially the robust public diplomacy of the Cold War era. The George H. W. Bush administration decided to take a “peace dividend” and cut the USIA budget in each succeeding year.<sup>40</sup>

This lack of enthusiasm for public diplomacy was adhered to and expanded upon by the new President. The Clinton administration preserved some key public diplomacy programs, notably the Fulbright Academic Exchanges in a kind of posthumous salute to Bill Clinton’s mentor and fellow Rhoads Scholar, Senator J. William Fulbright. But the Clinton administration continued the sharp cuts to the overall public diplomacy budget, especially in international information programs which suffered near catastrophic declines.<sup>41</sup>

By the beginning of the second Clinton term, the indications that USIA’s days were numbered grew more obvious. In 1998, there was an Executive-Legislative agreement to “merge” USIA (and originally also USAID) into the Department of State. The ostensible rationale was that this would not only save money but would bring public diplomacy closer to the center of foreign policy formulation. In truth, the accommodation worked out between Secretary Madeleine Albright and Senator Jesse Helms was a compromise to achieve funding for the current U.S. contribution and previous year’s arrears to the United Nations (UN).



The Clinton administration gained funding, including the significant backlog in funding for the U.S. contribution to the UN. In return, Senator Helms was to have his long time wish fulfilled – the emasculation of USAID's independence and influence in Congress by being placed within the Department of State. USIA's dismemberment was simply a bonus. In the negotiations that followed, USAID escaped confinement within State and emerged a weakened but still independent voice in the foreign policy establishment, but USIA, already weakened by years of budget cuts after the Cold War, was extinguished as an entity. (See the Foreign Affairs Reform and Restructuring Act of 1998. Public Law 105-277.) On October 1, 1999, the Agency's public diplomacy personnel and functions were scattered throughout the State Department bureaucracy, and its largest component was shorn away entirely as the Voice of America and the other broadcasting entities were placed with the independent Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG).<sup>42</sup>

It takes no great imagination to realize that the dismantling of the USIA, the dissolution of its personnel and functions with the State Department bureaucracy, and the creation of a BBG responsible to no one (not the Secretary of State, not even the President) is a compound and nearly fatal blow to the ability of the United States to project a global information strategy. We now examine the present situation in the years following the reorganization of the foreign affairs agencies and what future role that strategic information may have in the National Security Council process.

## AFTER THE *ANSCHLUSS* AND REINVENTING THE WHEEL

In the waning days of the existence of the USIA, the Clinton Network Access Control (NAC) on April 30, 1999, issued a still classified Presidential Decision Directive (PDD) 68 on International Public Information. The directive, according to published media reports at the time and the website of the Federation of American Scientists, was issued to “address problems identified during military missions in Kosovo and Haiti, when no single U.S. agency was empowered to coordinate U.S. efforts to sell its policies and to counteract bad press abroad.”<sup>43</sup> In addition, with the soon-to-be-accomplished “merger” of USIA into the Department of State, the existing NSC Directive, NSDD 77 issued in the Reagan administration would be inoperative, and PDD-68 was seen as a replacement for the Reagan document.

Senior officials of the Departments of State and Defense, Justice, Commerce, and Treasury, the CIA and the FBI, according to public sources, were designated as members of the International Public Information (IPI) Core Group. The Core Group was to be chaired by the soon-to-be-created position of Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs at the State Department. The IPI Core Group was to “assist efforts in defeating adversaries.” The U.S. intelligence community would “play a crucial role . . . for identifying hostile foreign propaganda and deception that targets the U.S.” In addition, again according to public reports, the IPI was designed to “influence foreign audiences” in support of U.S. foreign policy and to counteract propaganda by enemies of the United States. Reportedly, the IPI Core Group Charter stated that:

- IPI control over “international military information” was intended to “influence the emotions, motives, objective reasoning, and ultimately the behavior of foreign governments, organizations, groups, and individuals.”
- “The objective of IPI is to synchronize the informational objectives, themes, and messages that will be projected overseas . . . to prevent and mitigate crises and to influence foreign audiences in ways favorable to the achievement of U.S. foreign policy objectives.”
- Information distributed through IPI should be designed not “to mislead foreign audiences” and that information programs “must be truthful.”
- [Regarding the likelihood that foreign media reports are reflected in American media, information aimed at domestic audiences should] “be coordinated, integrated, deconflicted and synchronized with the [IPI Core Group] to achieve a synergistic effect for strategic information activities.”<sup>44</sup>

One might term PDD 68 merely “reinventing the wheel” but because the existing mechanism (NSDD-77) was being “deconstructed” along with the USIA, some means to coordinate strategic information had to be found.

The PDD 68 system likely might have worked had it become operational. However, because the incoming Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs, Evelyn Lieberman, was reluctant to sit down at the same table with the intelligence community, only one meeting of the IPI Core Group occurred during the Clinton administration. It was left to working level

bureaucrats to attempt to coordinate their international information activities in the absence of leadership from above.

## **A NEW DIRECTION**

The George W. Bush administration's first National Security Presidential Directive (NSPD-1) organized the NSC process to the desires of the new administration. NSPD-1 replaced the system of Presidential Decision Directive and Presidential Review Directives as an instrument for communicating presidential decisions about national security policies. The document listed the NSC attendees (both statutory and nonstatutory), the role of the Vice President presiding in the absence of the President, the strong agenda determining role of the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs, and the NSC's relationship with the National Economic Council (NEC). The directive also continued the role of the NSC Principals Committee (NSC/PC) and the NSC Deputies Committee (NSC/DC). NSPD-1 further set out the organization of the NSC process as follows:

Management of the development and implementation of national security policies by multiple agencies of the United States Government shall usually be accomplished by the NSC Policy Coordination Committees (NSC/PCCs). The NSC/PCCs shall be the main day to day fora for interagency coordination of national security policy.<sup>45</sup>

Six regional NSC/PCCs, chaired by an official of Under Secretary or Assistant Secretary rank as designated by the Secretary of State, were established. In addition,

“topical” or functional NSC/PCCs were established as follows:

- Democracy, Human Rights and International Operations
- International Development and Humanitarian Assistance
- Global Environment
- International Finance
- Transnational Economic Issues
- Counterterrorism and National Preparedness
- Defense Strategy, Force Structure, and Planning
- Arms Control
- Proliferation, Counter proliferation, and Homeland Defense
- Intelligence and Counterintelligence
- Records Access and Information Security

There was no NSC/PCC designated for Strategic Information, Public Diplomacy, or Foreign Information Activities. The closest approximation was in the PCC on Democracy, Human Rights, and International Operations. NSPD 1 also abolished by March 1, 2001, the existing system of Interagency Working Groups and other existing NSC interagency groups, ad hoc bodies, and executive committees, except for those established by statute.<sup>46</sup> Of immediate practical concern in the field of strategic information, the IPI Core Group was among the casualties, and no replacement organization or group was named. Strategic Information or Public Diplomacy did not appear to be a high priority in the early days of the new administration.

Following the terror attacks of September 11, 2001 (9/11), the Bush administration found itself in need of a strategic information policy and a structure to

deal with the acknowledged crisis in American public diplomacy. There was a general recognition that in the absence of an agency like the USIA, there was no central focus for public diplomacy, and the record of the State Department in public diplomacy since the “anschluss” which brought USIA into the Department was generally recognized to have been a failure.<sup>47</sup>

## GLOBAL COMMUNICATIONS

The solution might have been to resurrect the USIA or create a similar agency either within or outside the State Department as a number of reports and studies recommended.<sup>48</sup> Instead, the White House called forth a White House solution by creating a new White House Office of Global Communications (OGC) headed by a Deputy Assistant to the President. According to the Executive Order setting up the Office, the OGC’s mission was

to advise the President, the heads of appropriate offices within the Executive Office of the President and the heads of executive departments and agencies on utilization of the most effective means for the U.S. Government to ensure consistency in messages that will promote the interests of the United States abroad, prevent misunderstanding, build support for and among coalition partners of the United States, and inform international audiences.<sup>49</sup>

Among the functions of the new Office were:

- assessment of methods and strategies (except for “special activities,” i.e., covert operations) to deliver information to audiences abroad;
- development of a strategy for disseminating truthful, accurate and effective messages about the United States, its government and policies, and the American people and culture;

- coordination of the creation of temporary teams of communicators for short-term placement in areas of high global interest and media attention (however no team could be deployed without prior consultation with the Departments of State and Defense and prior notification to the NSC Advisor);
- encouragement of the use of state of the art media and technology.

While on the surface, the Office of Global Communication appeared to be a solution of sorts for the lack of direction and leadership in the strategic communication/public affairs arena, there were built-in flaws in the system that would prevent the OGC from being very effective in any of its functions. Chief among these flaws was that the OGC was outside the NSC process and the interagency system. The Executive Order itself stated that “nothing in this order shall be construed to impair or otherwise affect any function assigned by law or by the President to the National Security Council or to the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs.” Further, the Executive Order noted that it did not alter “existing authorities of any agency.”<sup>50</sup> Given the inherent weaknesses in the structure and authorities of the Office of Global Communications, it surprised few observers to note the steady decline in the OGC’s relevance and its eventual and unheralded disappearance from the White House organization chart in 2005.

## FUSION

Just as in the Clinton administration, for most of the Bush administration a rough form of coordination and

cooperation among working level professionals from the public diplomacy bureaus of the State Department and elements of DoD, USAID, and other agencies held the threads together while waiting for senior leaders to decide what form an international information strategy would take. The so-called “Fusion Team” which meets in State Annex 44 (the former USIA Headquarters Building) is the best example of keeping this flame alive. While the Fusion Team has an important function no doubt, it is no substitute for a top to bottom interagency process on strategic information which has not been evident since the end of the Reagan administration.

## **WHO’S IN CHARGE?**

The Department of State inherited public diplomacy from the USIA and would be expected to lead the effort on strategic information. Regrettably, for numerous reasons outlined in the nearly 30 reports and recommendations by public and private organizations designed to rescue public diplomacy from its current nadir, this State Department leadership did not materialize.<sup>51</sup> Without going into the details of systemic failure to utilize properly the resources of public diplomacy inherited by the Department in this venue, one can point to the lack of long-term, unified, and consistent leadership over public diplomacy as one major cause.

A succession of short-term leaders has presided over public diplomacy in the Department of State since October 1999. Under Secretary Evelyn Lieberman’s largely ineffective tenure ended with the Republican victory in 2000. After a lengthy transition, advertising executive Charlotte Beers was sworn in only a few weeks after 9/11. Her tenure was tortured and brief,



and when she departed “for personal reasons,” she was succeeded by an interim replacement, Assistant Secretary for Educational and Cultural Affairs Patricia Harrison, until the administration was able to convince Ambassador to Morocco Margaret Tutweiler to take up the challenge. Within a few months, Tutweiler, who arrived stating that she would stay only for a short time, left for Wall Street and was replaced again on an interim basis by Harrison. In a surprise appointment, President Bush announced that his close confidant and communications advisor, Karen Hughes, would take up the post of Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs, but the new appointment would not be taken up for nearly 5 months due to family commitments. Even under the best of circumstances, with this kind of revolving door in leadership, it is hard to imagine an effective public diplomacy strategy being undertaken.

To Ms. Hughes’ credit, she and her Deputy, Dina Powell, “hit the ground running” with a series of outreach encounters and listening tours at home and abroad. Hughes appeared to recognize the most serious flaw in the foreign affairs reorganization of 1998-99, i.e., that there is no unity of command or central authority over public diplomacy in the Department of State. If anything, there is even less unity in the interagency process regarding strategic communication. Input over assignments, resources, and administrative issues can lead to input over policy and strategy, but in the absence of any influence over officers in the field, an Under Secretary is powerless to manage the program responsibilities, and public diplomacy is a program-intensive function. A number of alleged “fixes” were made in the Department to strengthen Hughes’ position within the bureaucracy, including assigning

one regional deputy assistant secretary in each regional bureau to be in charge of public diplomacy and giving (in theory at least) the Under Secretary shared line authority over that position with the regional assistant secretary. Evaluation, budgeting, and other administrative functions for State Department public diplomacy bureaus and offices reported to the Under Secretary rather than to individual bureau heads, thanks to Hughes' insistence.

Other minor measures could be taken within the authority of the Department to centralize the Under Secretary's role in public diplomacy. Still, as numerous outside reports point out, only so much can be done within the existing flawed structure. Hughes apparently came to realize this and departed for the greener pastures of the private sector in 2008. After a lengthy Senate hold on his nomination, a new Under Secretary, James Glassman, was sworn in with only a few months left in the Bush administration. Glassman, formerly with the BBG, has a keen understanding of public diplomacy and has made an impressive start in what is surely a lame duck role. There is little time for the kind of dramatic change that is required to revitalize public diplomacy no matter how valiant the effort on Glassman's part. Eventually perhaps, Congress will tire of a band-aid approach to fixing public diplomacy and decide to undo or redo the reorganization of the foreign affairs agencies so badly botched in 1998-99. In the meantime, America's strategic information may be neither strategic nor very informative.

## **WHAT CAN BE DONE?**

The 2005 report by the Public Diplomacy Council, *A Call for Action on Public Diplomacy*, made the case that it may be impossible to turn back the clock and recreate

the independent USIA, complete with responsibility over international civilian broadcasting. The Council called instead for a semi-independent agency lodged within the State Department but with a unified chain of command and control over overseas public diplomacy operations.<sup>52</sup> This would eliminate the serious flaw which plagues the Under Secretary and would result in a much improved performance. With the change of administrations in Washington, however, there may exist a brief period during which a reenergized and independent agency for public diplomacy could be created and be well-integrated into the national security process as it was in the Reagan and Eisenhower administrations.

Importantly, the crucial role of localized public diplomacy must be recognized. Public diplomacy must return to its “field-driven” roots, and public diplomacy officers in the field must have greater latitude to create strategies within the context of the societies and cultures in which they operate. This presupposes that adequate resources, too, must be directed to overseas operations and the increased staffing required. The cleverest strategy will fail if there are too few personnel and financial resources available for its implementation.

It is critical to realize, as several studies have pointed out in recent years, that the Department of State is not the only important actor in public diplomacy or strategic information in the U.S. Government.<sup>53</sup> In order to coordinate and manage the breadth of international information and exchange programs conducted by any new agency, State, Defense, USAID, and the more than 60 offices, bureaus, and executive departments that already report international exchanges, training, or information programs, the NSC or interagency process on strategic information must be reconstituted. Indeed, nearly half of all of the reports and studies on public

diplomacy undertaken in the past 3 years have pointed to interagency coordination as a serious problem that must be addressed.<sup>54</sup> Solutions vary and include structures within the NSC and outside it, but there is broad agreement that the current interagency process requires strengthening.

Based on the history of American experimentation with strategic information in the NSC process, there are two periods which emerge as worthy exemplars—the Eisenhower administration and the Reagan administration. Both administrations had elaborate, and perhaps to some overly bureaucratized, systems of advice, analysis, monitoring, and execution of strategic information programs at multiple levels from the working level to the senior leader level. Yet, for the most part, they worked, and for that reason alone are worth a careful look. The criticisms of both the Eisenhower and the Reagan NSC processes over the passage of time seem to be not very cogent. Eisenhower's NSC process was not too slow and unwieldy, and if it proved to be so—as in a period of crisis—it was by-passed. The Reagan NSC system is too often seen through the prism of the Iran-Contra Affair; that situation was an aberration, not the norm, and the reforms instituted by the Tower Board set the system straight.

The conclusion is inescapable. Congress and the Executive should relook at the organization of public diplomacy/strategic communication and alter the current flawed design to create unity of command and clear lines of authority whether that is in a separate agency, an agency within the State Department, or some third variant. Because “localized public diplomacy” has been shown to be more effective than world-wide strategies designed inside the Beltway, public diplomacy should be field-driven. In addition,

the Executive Branch should return to a more elaborate and tested formula for an interagency process that worked in both the Eisenhower and the Reagan NSCs.

## ENDNOTES - CHAPTER 8

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## CHAPTER 9

### A FRONT-LINE VIEW OF “THE” INTERAGENCY: THE PRACTICE OF POLICY COORDINATION INSIDE THE GOVERNMENT

Dennis E. Skocz

#### INTRODUCTION

A friend and interlocutor in many an interagency meeting never tired of protesting the use of the term “interagency” as a noun, as in, “*the* interagency has done this or that or decided so and so” and as used in this volume. I would suggest that the use of term as a noun is not accidental or entirely a matter of style. There is more than abbreviation at work here. The usage reflects a readiness to make the interagency process into a thing, more precisely, into a thing standing over and against those who deal with it and in it. It reflects an adversarial notion of the process – *the* interagency as the enemy. In one and the same usage we reify the process and separate ourselves from it. Perhaps we should say that “we have met *the* interagency and it is us.” To be sure, usage reflects a perceived truth with a basis in the reality of interagency process. The interagency is often a scene of contestation – and, it should be; the success of the interagency process depends in large measure on an honest and full airing of differences. What is objectionable in the usage (“*the* interagency”) is more the tendency, reflected in the phrase, to pretend that any of us who play in the interagency “arena” are not responsible for its policy outcomes – or for the way the process unfolds.

The focus of this chapter is process. An individual participant in the process is concerned with surviving and prospering in interagency dealings. In a broader perspective, as citizens, we are all concerned about a good process, defined as one that supports good policymaking and, in the end, good policy. In this reflection, I hope to offer the lessons learned from a career-length involvement in “*the* interagency” — lessons as they apply to individual actors in the process and to the system as whole.

The chapter will draw heavily (though not exclusively) on lessons-learned from interagency planning for post-conflict Kosovo operations, i.e., the civil-military mission that began in June 1999, after the Allied bombing campaign in Kosovo and Serbia, and continues to the time of the writing of this chapter. (For those unfamiliar with the Kosovo operation, a review of Appendix I to this chapter could be useful.) Interagency planning for that particular mission, began in March and concluded in May. At the time, I was Director of the Office of Contingency Planning and Peacekeeping in the Political-Military Affairs Bureau of the State Department. In that role, I participated in meetings of the Executive Committee (ExComm) set up to drive the planning effort. My particular task was to head up the working-level effort to coordinate the production of the functionally specific plans that would go together to form the “41-pager” — an overall concept of operations or “pol-mil plan” for the post-conflict mission in Kosovo.

Not all interagency process is as complex, urgent, and compressed as planning for a stabilization and reconstruction effort following a military operation. The high-stakes challenge of such an interagency undertaking, however, will clearly, indeed starkly,

expose the difficulties of coordinating policy across a range of issues (and agencies) and at various levels. The idea of using an example like this one is that if we find an approach that wins acceptance by those involved—specifically, one that is found useful in such a demanding scenario—it should prove its practicality in the day-to-day work of coordinating policy, programs, and operations across agencies. So Kosovo will serve as a backdrop for the lessons learned about interagency process offered in this chapter. As intimated above, I will analyze the process at two levels: systemic and individual. For any given aspect of interagency process, we will consider, first, how the system can be better served and then, second, how individual government officials operating in the interagency “arena” can enhance their contributions to effective policymaking while advancing their agencies’ equities.

As background, let me offer a gist of the Kosovo planning process in five stages: (a) mobilization, (b) engagement, (c) mopping up, (d) coalition thinking, and (e) hand off.

### **Mobilization.**

Ideally a carefully orchestrated interagency planning process should precede a “complex contingency operation” involving many different agency players. Reality often gets in the way, however, and we are forced to settle for less. In the press of events, improvisation and “doing it the way we did the last time” may substitute for a more disciplined and formalized process that promises a long, hard slog to agreement and a plan. It helps when, early enough in the game, all realize that a plan will be needed and that

resting on precedent will not work. This, I suggest, is what happened with respect to Kosovo planning. Until the collapse in early spring of 1999 of the Rambouillet negotiations between the Kosovars and the Serbians, one following the process could reasonably expect that agreements that might be reached between the parties at Rambouillet would provide a blueprint for governance, public security, repatriation of displaced persons, and administration of justice—all the issues that emerged in the conflict.<sup>1</sup> It was only after the effort to come to agreement failed that all involved in the interagency coordination of policy regarding the Kosovo crisis realized that some kind of plan would be needed, and that planning would need to start from “scratch.” The question of public order and security offers an example of an issue that had to be addressed anew. If a condition for the end of bombing was that all Serbian security forces vacate Kosovo (military and police),<sup>2</sup> then the questions that arise are: Who or what will provide for security? Likewise, if Serbian officials quit their posts in Kosovo, how will the administration of Kosovo be provided for? With questions like these not finding an answer within a negotiation process, the need for a plan becomes evident.<sup>3</sup>

### **Engagement.**

Bismark, I believe, compared making policy to making sausage—not a pretty sight. I will confess to hyperbole in invoking the sausage-making metaphor. Indeed, I would argue that interagency collaboration in Kosovo set a high standard. Nonetheless, coming to agreement across a large number of agencies on short notice and with a close deadline creates pressures. In such a scenario, one should expect debate, stalemate

and frustration, impatience with the pace of progress, and others' apparent inability to appreciate one's own critical insights. It should not be thought that the object of meeting and planning together is a "feel good," but only apparent resolution of differences. Once planning for Kosovo post-conflict operations began, debate was necessary and a good sign that the process was working. Issues come up, and it is unrealistic to think that they can be answered—and answered well—without debate. "Who would do what and how?" This is a question applicable to every aspect of societal life from policing to revenue raising.<sup>4</sup> Logisticians pride themselves on planning, and rightfully so. But the kind of interagency planning that took place re Kosovo began with a debate, which, to its credit, did *not* reach ready understandings on issues. We will return to this later; for now I observe that those involved in the ExComm, set up to meet almost daily for planning, seemed to share the premise that it was better that they debated and settled issues at the planning table before an operation was launched than that those charged with implementation find themselves lacking guidance and forced to debate responsibilities in the field.

### **Mopping Up.**

Some 40 officials comprising about a dozen agencies labored at the 41-page tick-and-bullet plan that laid out the concept of operations for the post-conflict operation in Kosovo as envisioned by the United States. The worker bees in this effort operated under an ExComm at the Deputy Assistant Secretary level, a group of some 12 to 15, under the direction of the Deputies Committee (the Deputy Secretaries of cabinet-level agencies—DC). Debates at the ExComm level produced options for DC

decision. DC decisions were translated into operational terms in draft plans covering various mission areas by multiagency subgroups of action officers (= worker bees).<sup>5</sup> “Mopping up” may be a bit figurative. The expression is meant to refer to painstaking detail work by the subgroups to ensure that each piece in the plan offered a concrete realization of a policy directive, and that it fit with other related aspects of the plan. “What happens if . . . ?” “Who does . . . ?” “Where do your agency’s responsibilities end and mine begin?” At this stage of the process, most of the basic issues have been resolved but in formulating specific taskings – going for greater granularity – problems surface which need to be “bumped up” to higher levels for resolution. If the virtue of the Engagement phase is reaching agreement on fundamentals of approach, then the Mopping Up phase performs a reality check on concepts already vetted at a higher policy level. Its premise is that the devil is in the details; its virtue is a finicky pragmatism.

### **Coalition Thinking.**

An interagency policy, plan, or program is, by definition, “Made in the USA.” If it hopes to serve as guidance for a multinational or multilateral effort, then it must win “buy in” from a variety of collaborators in a mission. Kosovo interagency planning was continuously linked to diplomatic consultations regarding the post-conflict situation, so this aspect of the planning effort is not really a phase.<sup>6</sup> Two-way communication between planners and diplomats worked to promote diplomacy informed by a sense of what was practically possible and planning influenced by an understanding of “politics as the art of the possible.” “Coalition Thinking” is meant to rule out the idea that interagency

planning of the kind described here can be conducted in a vacuum. "Buy in" or agreement on a plan—or better, approach—will come when it reflects thinking from "outside" the U.S. Government—from potential partners in implementation. It may be useful to think of the plan meant here as a document that begins as a U.S. proposal and develops toward an agreement by operators on how to go about a task.

### **Hand Off.**

It is wrong to think that a plan like the 41-pager ends up a field guide for every soldier and aid worker deployed to the field. As one involved closely in the Kosovo plan, I had little reason to read it after work on it came to an end. To be sure, copies were used by other planners in the field as a template for more refined and tactical-level planning. The success of this plan and any such plan consists in its internalization. An inclusive planning process that reaches out beyond the group charged to pull a plan together will achieve wide understanding and support. Its solutions may not seem imaginative or daring, but they will be understood and accepted by implementers as reasonable and practical. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Kosovo Forces (KFOR) took to the field in June 1999. A small United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) contingent was there as well. The Organization for Security Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the European Union (EU) would soon establish their presence in Kosovo. The launch was not without surprises and problems. Implementation would meet up with ethnic and political challenges. The "final chapter" is yet to be written regarding Kosovo. The launch of a plan is nonetheless its end as



an integral and finished document. What follows in the field is often a series of mutations and adaptations which depart from the original outline. In the case of Kosovo, UNMIK and the leaders of KFOR collaborated in an ongoing planning process concerned with implementation.<sup>7</sup> In many cases, however, a single document called “the” plan may cease to exist and planning will tend to merge with implementing. None of this is necessarily a bad thing. The successor to a plan might well be coherent adjustments to a changing situation carried out under the aegis of a strategy that is understood by all involved and periodically validated on an interagency basis.

And so this capsule history of interagency planning for Kosovo post-conflict operations ends here, and now I hope to offer some lessons-learned not only from the Kosovo effort but from the process of interagency coordination in various other forms it takes.

## **INCLUSIVENESS**

It may be—as sometimes joked—that to ensure full representation at an interagency meeting, the host agency should let it seem to slip out that a very restricted group will gather to address a problem. No one will want to be left out and all will insist on being at the table. The first concern in bringing together an interagency group for planning or other policy shaping task must, of course, be effectiveness—bringing together the right number of right agencies to ensure that all stakeholders and potential contributors can have a say and share in the work. Leaning to more rather than fewer agencies may seem to work against effective decisionmaking. After all, the odds of achieving consensus in a larger group would seem to

be less than doing so in a smaller group. Pressed for time, the argument for a small group seems even more compelling. To be sure, more is not necessarily better, and the criterion for success is not “how many” but “which” agencies are represented. If the end result of the interagency process is an operation to be carried out, it will be essential to include all who have a role in implementing that operation. Agencies which have a role in shaping the product—whether a plan or set of policies determining the result—will be more likely to execute with understanding, commitment, and success. Conversely, a plan put together by a small group in Washington with little input from agencies charged with implementation will seem like an alien imposition and invite questions, second-guessing, and improvisation.

Inclusiveness recognizes the variety of intraagency actors with a stake in policy and its outcome. In my judgment, the strength of the Kosovo ExComm consisted in that several State Department bureaus with equities in post-conflict planning were represented at the table. Not only the regional bureau—European Affairs (EUR)—but others like International Narcotics and Law Enforcement (INL), International Organizations (IO), and Political-Military Affairs (PM) regularly participated. Likewise, the Defense Department was represented by regional and functional elements from the Joint Staff (JS) and the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD). In fact, around the table sat many *intra*agency actors from the interagency group that had assembled. At higher policymaking levels (the DC, for example), each cabinet-level agency has one spokesperson. This is appropriate for the “big picture” decisions that need to be made at those levels. In shaping policy and in planning operations or program

initiatives, however, a different logic must prevail. Here one wants to capture all viable options, critique possible approaches from various angles, and scope out potential pitfalls that might be missed if participation in the process is kept restricted. It is less important if disagreements arise, so long as clearly framed options for higher-level decisionmakers are formulated and advanced.

An inclusive approach raises the odds that pertinent experience and expertise will enter into the evaluation of policy, operations, and programs.<sup>8</sup> Although it might take more time to gather and take account of more views, it can speed assessments by establishing the facts by reference to those who know. The system is spared having to backtrack when it learns later what it had left out of consideration earlier. While a regional bureau, for example, may have the knowledge of internal and regional politics in the geographic area under discussion, it cannot be expected to know, for example, what programs are available to train and equip a police force, how long it might take to achieve a certain level of competence, and what kind of personnel and resources will be required for the task. These are the kinds of issues a bureau like INL is experienced in addressing. For its part, INL does not work in isolation. Not only must it cooperate with regional bureaus within State, but in the example given, it must reach out to entities like the International Criminal Investigation Training Assistance Program (ICITAP) within other agencies like the Justice Department. ICITAP has an implementing function with respect to the training of police in foreign countries. Programs designed, coordinated, and funded in INL are carried out through ICITAP. Such programs may complement international programs, requiring the IO bureau to exercise a liaison role with UN agencies, for example.

The key to well-informed and expeditious decisionmaking at the Kosovo ExComm was uninhibited cross-talk around the table, irrespective of agency stove-pipes. The reader will appreciate how such discussion promotes the expeditious handling of issues. Having everyone together at one time and in one place to hear what is said enhances a coherent understanding of facts and positions and helps to build consensus and commitment when it comes time to resolve an issue.

Such cross-talk works best when an inclusive group of players has been gathered into the process. In an inclusive setting with a horizontal or flat information flow, a subject-matter expert in INL speaking about a public security issue with a Joint Staff colonel would not “clear” his or her position up through the State Department. The flow of discussion on a given issue would make ad hoc allies of functional experts from different agencies who would join to argue for or against a position that regional experts in State and OSD might have agreed upon going into the discussion. In exploring options, it is important that participants in the meeting operate under a rubric very much like the “not for attribution” rule that often applies to conferences or the *ad referendum* rule that applies to diplomatic discussions in multilateral organizations like NATO or the Organization of American States (OAS). In the latter case, diplomats offer their views with the understanding of their interlocutors, that they are speaking provisionally, i.e, pending guidance addressing the specifics of that day’s meeting. I am not suggesting that clearing positions with one’s hierarchy is dispensable; only that problem-solving requires that obtaining clearances be deferred until a freer exchange conducted on a problem-solving basis has resulted in joint position that can be bumped up.

In the Kosovo planning effort, the emphasis had to be on problem-solving, coming up with new approaches to deal with issues which would materialize in as a little as a couple of months. The point was not to stand pat in the defense of existing agency positions on already well defined issues. There were no “already existing positions.” The issues were emergent or in the offing. Positions were to be determined. To be sure, in such settings each agency brings its equities, predispositions, capabilities and lacks, resources and expertise, and “red lines” into the fray. These were not out of play – nor should they have been – in the Kosovo process. I will underscore later the importance of a true debate of issues within any interagency process. For now, I only want to observe that a problem-solving approach is not incompatible with a full and frank airing of issues.

The issue of “who” or “what agency” – local, U.S., or international; civilian or military – would provide public order and security in Kosovo immediately after the departure of Serbian military and police was unavoidable; the cessation of Allied bombing was predicated on both Serbian police and military vacating Kosovo.<sup>9</sup> The issue was not one on which agencies had well-defined positions; indeed, it was an unprecedented issue in the history of other international operations where international police could assume the existence of local police. In other missions, debate addressed issues about how the international forces would be deployed, whether local police met human rights norms, and how their policing of local police could be controlled and improved.

Although public order and security issues in Kosovo were without precedent, different agencies with a stake in the outcome could be expected to have different perspectives to bring to the discussion. Often,

these were based in what they could and could not deliver. In such cases, the military legitimately makes the point that soldiers are not police. In the Kosovo case, information operations (IO) educated all to the reality that there is not a standing force of international police, and mission-specific groups of international police had never been empowered to carry out police functions, only to observe and mentor local police. Others around the table insisted on the urgency of coming up with some game plan for addressing the public security function.<sup>10</sup> The compromise reached – reflected in UN Resolution 1244 – called for forces on the ground to provide public security until civilian police could be deployed to take on the task.<sup>11</sup> Additionally, we undertook to urge quick action to deploy an international police force with authority to perform police functions and to expedite programs to train and deploy local police as soon as possible.

One might reasonably think that the peculiar nature of the Kosovo process described here limits the applicability of any lesson learned to the “normal case”: interagency review of discrete issues that come before offices and action-officers on a day-to-day basis. Often such issues have a familiar look, numerous precedents predate a specific issue, agency positions can seem cast in concrete; all in all, the opportunity for problem-solving does not present itself, and the scope of agencies involved in the evaluation of the issue seems fixed as well. I would like to suggest that inclusiveness (and all that goes with it, like a problem-solving attitude) not only has application in such cases but may be the way out of the bind that so frequently arises, i.e., stalemate and hurriedly bumping up the matter to policy bosses. In the day-to-day setting, reaching out to agencies with subject-matter expertise not usually

tapped with respect to an issue can give something like a disinterested third-party perspective to an issue on which there is deadlock. Frank acknowledgement of differing interests and recasting the question to “How can the outcome accomplish your basic interest and ours?” is another approach that applies what we learned in the pressure-cooker of putting together an interagency pol-mil plan for Kosovo. For the individual action officer participating in an interagency review of a policy, program, or operation, the questions to ask are: How can I better understand the core interests of my interlocutors? Can I reach out to others in the interagency community who might be able to bring fresh perspective to a deadlocked issue? How can I make common cause with others outside my “stovepipe” or hierarchy—without misrepresenting the established positions of my agency?<sup>12</sup>

## **VERTICAL COORDINATION AND “RIGHT-LEVELING”**

Interagency coordination has a horizontal and vertical dimension.<sup>13</sup> It occurs not only across agencies and but up and down levels of authority as well. Many issues can be resolved at the working-level with a quick “OK” from office directors and their counterparts. Other issues make their way to the top of the chain and may require decisionmaking by the Deputies Committee or even the Principals Committee (cabinet-level agency heads, e.g., the Secretary of State, Secretary of Defense).

From a systemic point of view, the process of policy, program, and operations review should play out at the right level. But what is the right level?

I have always thought that one of the successes of the Kosovo planning process was to have situated itself at the right level. The ExComm was nominally an Assistant Secretary-level group. Normally, Deputy Assistant Secretaries and Office Directors participated. This put its participants close enough to policymakers to understand their big picture policy concerns, and close enough to implementers to put ExComm members in touch with ground truth and what was likely to prove doable or not. The task of planning for an operation of the kind that would unfold in Kosovo made this logic compelling.

Another kind of task—i.e., other than that of planning for a stability operation—might locate the right level for interagency interaction higher or lower on the scale. For almost any kind of issue that enters into the interagency process, action will not be limited to the level where most of the work will take place. Agreement at the working-level, for example, will need to find endorsement at one or two levels above. Disagreement at that level will drive the process higher. Framing broad strategy will not initially engage working-level officers in various agencies. Policy planning shops in various agencies along with their Directors and staff will work such issues with select Assistant Secretaries (depending on the subject matter), J-5 chiefs and staffs (for the military), and possibly even outside groups connected with a new administration (for initiatives gestated before a new administration comes to power). When the broad outlines of a strategy or new initiative are agreed on and laid out, the process percolates downward with a view to working out subordinate strategies and implementation.

Failure to address interagency issues at the right level can produce unworkable policies or technically



well-crafted programs or operations which make no policy sense and may indeed run counter to one or more policy objectives. Success in locating the interagency work at the right level, on the other hand, will work towards ensuring that new policies are implemented well and that ongoing programs and operations continue to work with evolving policy over time and through various administrations.

“Right-Leveling” needs to take into consideration the nature of the interagency policy action. Is it how to flesh out a new initiative? A bottom-up review of a long-established program? Funding an operation without the prospect of new money? Negotiating agency responsibilities for oversight of a temporary overseas mission? Evaluating a license for the transfer of a weapons-system technology? Putting together an interagency team for an international conference? Assessing the political and legal implications of a Status of Forces agreement? Reaching agreement or taking the right action on questions like these requires determining not only a good “horizontal” mix of actors from across the interagency community, but determining as well the level at which most decisions will be reached and when action either needs to be raised to a higher level or can be pushed downward and/or out to the field.

Those with some responsibility for shaping the interagency process will want to look to examples of success for guidance as to how to structure a process for an interagency task under consideration. They should look to at the lessons taught for policymaking by processes that did not work well.

Those operating within an already existing process and without the ability to reshape it still need to consider the question of conducting themselves in a vertical dimension, i.e., in an interagency process

that operates not only across agencies but also up and down a hierarchy. It is, I would suggest, a universal rule implicitly understood, if not always explicitly formulated, that action officers should try to work out agreement with their counterparts in others agencies without raising the matter to their bosses to resolve. It neither enhances one's career nor does it contribute to efficiency in policymaking or shaping or implementation to raise an issue to a higher level at the first sign of resistance from another agency.

"Verticality," however, can be invoked to press to a conclusion at the working level. Many learn soon that raising the prospect of referring a matter up one's own agency hierarchy can elicit greater willingness from one's other-agency counterpart to strike a deal. In such a situation, one's counterparts might figure that they have more leverage to influence an outcome if they press on with you, as someone at the working level for example, than having you come back to them to deliver a "decision" from your hierarchy. Such a decision, of course, does not end the interagency discussion, but it requires your counterparts to raise the matter upward within their hierarchy, a move that often reflects poorly on them and reduces the efficiency of the process.

Verticality works in two directions. Another approach is to look down the chain, to appeal to facts on the ground as a way to elicit agreement across the interagency process. Officers need not limit themselves to the experience of implementers in their own agencies. Arguably, appealing to the experience of operators in the agencies of one's counterparts might have more weight in their considerations. Let me offer a hypothetical example. Suppose you are in the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and want to gain the support of OSD and

Joint Staff counterparts for resettlement allowances for demilitarized combatants in a stabilization and reconstruction operation. You might argue that U.S. military in the field will benefit from the reduction in armed adversaries that your demobilization and resettlement project will bring about.

The individual action officer also learns that there are agency-specific hierarchies and an interagency hierarchy. Everyone will invoke the decisions of a DC to settle disputes at their (lower) levels. Of course, standing DC decisions may not offer pat solutions to emergent issues—ones that vary just enough from guidance a DC may have delivered earlier to require debate and resolution. At this point, interagency disputants at the sub-DC level will need to agree on the interpretation of earlier guidance or, at the very least, frame the issue clearly for DC consideration so that new guidance is forthcoming, and it does not invite differing interpretations.<sup>14</sup>

It is bad form and bad process to blame policymakers for ambiguous guidance. It is precisely the function of those presenting options up the chain to frame the options so that policymakers understand the full operational or programmatic implications of the choices and those seeking guidance obtain the guidance they need. If there is the back-and-forth of debate across the interagency spectrum, there is also an up-and-down movement of seeking and obtaining guidance. The common interest of different agencies in obtaining unambiguous guidance needs to prevail over parochial agency-specific concerns that might tempt one to stack the deck in framing options. The latter practice will only create unnecessary up-and-down movement. This weakens the process, delays decisions, and can undermine the implementation

of U.S. policy. Excessive vertical movement also undermines the confidence of policymakers in those—most of the readers of this—charged to advise on and implement policies.

## **“DUKE IT OUT”**

If it seems that much of the interagency process is best described as a negotiation, that is not accidental. It is. One should understand, however, that negotiation does not obviate debate. In fact, vigorous debate is essential to good interagency process.<sup>15</sup> Nothing is gained by ready agreement to vaguely worded conclusions. The system is adversarial, and the results are generally better if each agency weighs in with its equities, interests, and red lines.<sup>16</sup> The Kosovo process suggests the value of insisting on clear formulations and pressing agency-specific points. Let me give an example. All of the various agencies with something to gain or lose on the issue of public security might have been ready to agree early on to description of the military task of a post-conflict stabilization force as being “creating a secure environment for . . . .” The military could interpret this to mean that their responsibilities were limited to mopping up operations against combatants and deterring attacks of a military nature from one or another quarter. Those concerned with law and order might interpret the language to mean that military forces would assume police functions—from crowd control to arrest and detention, to forceful action against crime syndicates—until civilian police could assume those functions. Those providing humanitarian aid could read the phraseology to mean that they will somehow be unobtrusively protected so that they can carry on their work with minimal or reduced risk of

harm and without compromise to their organizational independence (i.e., without being identified with the military or perceived as serving a political agenda).

An honest and concrete debate about the precise role of the military forces, first on the scene, led to very specific understandings of what they would and would not do. This meant addressing highly focused questions, hypothetical but concrete scenarios, and apt precedents from recent past operations—all of these provoking clarifications about the military's role. What reaction would forces take if rioting were to take place? If it happened literally before their very eyes? Would the military forces arrest and detain offenders? Seek out and pursue criminals? Escort nongovernmental organization (NGO) relief workers in high-risk areas? In the debate over this issue, the military came to understand that civilian police would not be on the scene concurrently with a NATO force and that Rules of Engagement as well as Mission Essential Tasks would have to include actions to deal with a range of public-order problems until the public order function could pass to international civilian police and then locally trained and deployed police. Absent a vigorous debate, driven by pointed questions and concrete scenarios, it is likely that forces would have deployed to the scene with only vague guidance. Issues avoided in Washington would have confronted the troops and undermined the overall mission as commanders would be forced to improvise solutions in the absence of concrete guidance.<sup>17</sup>

Debate in the interagency process cannot go on forever, and stonewalling is no virtue. Whenever subject-matter expertise can answer a question, it should be sought and respected. In the above example, recent precedent known to experts clearly indicated that

it would take more than a few weeks for international civilian police to deploy. When issues need to be raised to higher levels, a full, open, and honest debate will help those who prepare an options paper to give policymakers a choice of realistic alternatives and a concrete sense of the pros and cons.

At the working level, there is an equal need for full and frank debate. In my first assignment to Washington and experience with both intraagency and interagency clearance, I thought that quick agreement to a draft cable or talking points was clearly the most desirable outcome. I might have imagined that a vague term served to bring about agreement from all concerned, thus resolving an issue with dispatch. I soon learned that a shortcut of this kind can become a long detour. An issue dispatched without close examination and full debate can come back again. Nothing is gained and time is lost by coming to a hasty agreement that leaves meanings vague and needed details unspecified. The consequences of hasty review or conflict-adverse agreement to language that only papers over differences can be more serious, depending on the issue. At the systemic level, we want a structure and process that allow a full and unfettered airing of issues. At the working level, the individual officer or official should look out for vague language, unclear details, or gaps in reasoning. Especially, as a deadline approaches and pressure builds to come to agreement, the officer must read drafts carefully and fully. In discussions, any participant should feel free to visit or revisit an issue. That same participant should expect to provoke expressions of dissatisfaction from colleagues driven by a sense of urgency and a dominating desire to reach closure. This sort of problem can be minimized by trying to anticipate and address issues early in

the process. Flagging issues early on, even if only generically, will help to avoid giving the impression of being a spoiler with a habit of keeping colleagues at work late on Friday night with last-minute scruples about wording.

## DIPLOMATIC CONNECTION

Kosovo interagency planning benefited greatly by its tie in with ongoing diplomacy.<sup>18</sup> The “planning” that took place was for a mission that would be carried out by a group of multilateral organizations (NATO, EU, OSCE, and UN). The plan amounted to a U.S. proposal as to how the international community should address the task of post-conflict stability and reconstruction. The plan—really a concept of operations—would have to achieve concurrence from the organizations envisioned to play a role in its realization and from the countries which would influence deliberations and decisions in those organizations. Ambassador James Dobbins, a veteran of previous interagency efforts at planning for post-conflict situations, played a key role in linking planning to diplomacy, thereby aiding both. For their part, interagency planners need a continuing real-time sense of what is possible politically and diplomatically. They can secure this from a diplomacy which explores the thinking of potential partners in an operation. Ideas that may make sense from an operational-technical standpoint may not be workable politically. Diplomacy can also validate ideas that emerge in the planning process, reassuring planners that a concept which they have developed will enjoy support; this frees them to move on to other aspects of a draft plan that require attention. Possibilities for resolving a problem can emerge in diplomatic discussion—possibilities which

may not occur to planners. The linking of diplomacy and planning is a two-way communication. Ideas vetted and scrubbed within an interagency process focused on what is practically possible can inform diplomatic-political discussions and favor realistic deliberations and decisions at the coalition, multilateral, and international levels.

What are the lessons learned from the Kosovo planning experience for day-to-day interagency process which may not involve an international mission or operation of the kind that was launched in Kosovo? The example points to the need to look beyond the interagency process itself in order to make that process work at its best. Very often, the matters addressed in interagency settings do have a diplomatic dimension and interagency actors will want to keep themselves apprised of other countries' views of the issues in play. It is difficult to think of an issue that comes up in a political-military (State-DOD) context which does not have a diplomatic dimension. Perhaps, it is useful here to distinguish between factual information related to the countries or regions involved in an issue (for example, a foreign assistance issue needs to take into account the per capita gross domestic product [GDP] in a country) and the views and mind set of foreign interlocutors about various alternatives under discussion. Interagency players may be well-informed about facts on the ground through public and classified sources of information, but this is not the same as an appreciation of country-actors' perspectives derived from the ongoing personal-professional contact and dialogue that occurs in diplomacy.

State officers participating in the Washington interagency process more often than not have come to Washington from a foreign assignment and have



diplomatic experience as described here. When it is related to the country or area under discussion, it should not be neglected. On the contrary, it should be proactively sought and factored into deliberations. A State Foreign Service Officer who has just completed an assignment in South Asia might be just the person to ask about Indian attitudes on a regional security issue. A Defense Attache back from a posting in Central Asia can provide valuable insights into cultural and geographic factors bearing on regional stability. The kind of understanding sought after here has a long shelf life. It is more than the knowledge that comes from the most current spot reporting of events on the ground. Its consists in the appreciation of the motives, equities, and outlooks that international actors bring to issues which come to Washington as issues for interagency review.<sup>19</sup> What others might think about an issue from their own cultural-political-ideological perspectives is just as important and “real” as “incontestable facts” that are available to interagency actors. Washington is an information hub. There is no dearth of information available to action officers and policymakers. The volume and extent of information from every quarter can seem at times a curse. Such an availability of information can beguile one into thinking that one has all the pertinent information one needs to deliberate – and, if we take “information” to mean empirical data, then perhaps the conclusion is warranted. Input in the broadest sense, however, must include the more perspectival and subjective understandings that come from the interpersonal and cross-cultural domain of diplomacy.

A “live” link up of the kind provided by Ambassador Dobbins in the Kosovo case is probably the exception rather than the rule when it comes to most interagency

business. For the most part, reporting cables from embassies in countries involved with the issue will be a key source of input for the understandings described here. Interagency officers should prize reports which offer a vivid sense of the back and forth in a diplomatic discussion of an issue to the degree that this reveals basic attitudes of foreign interlocutors. Readers do well to learn the clues and cues to others' thinking that the report of a diplomatic discussion or debate offers. Very often, the report of a bilateral meeting or a multilateral discussion will seem uninformative or dull to a reader new to "diplomatese" or the worldviews of the particular discussants whose conversation is reported. The novice reader should persist in the task of becoming a skilled interpreter of such language. What is said repeatedly? What is said for the first time? What is left unsaid and why? Is there a variation in a stock formula? What is a speaker's reaction when presented with a difficult issue or a discrepancy in his or her statements? Reading between the lines is the "name of the game."

The interagency process is not self-contained. The preceding discussion of diplomacy illustrates how interagency deliberation and decisionmaking relates to diplomacy between nations. Closer to home, interagency process finds its place within inter-Branch process. Congressional debate, budget making, resolutions, and legislation goes toward forming the context in which interagency process unfolds. As it behooves interagency actors to develop a sensibility for diplomacy and diplomatese, so it makes sense for them to acquire comparable skills for interpreting the sense of Congress.<sup>20</sup> Officers working in Washington should seek opportunities to attend congressional hearings related to their work or join others briefing

congressional staff. Think tanks, the National Defense University, and the Foreign Service Institute often invite legislators and their staff to conferences on issues of foreign policy and national security, providing an opportunity for officers to develop a first-hand appreciation of the view from the Hill.

## **WORKING LEVEL OFFICIAL**

I began this chapter with an emphasis on systemic arrangements that favor good interagency process on major undertakings like post-conflict planning for Kosovo. I will conclude by concentrating on the day-to-day world of the working level official involved in interagency processes. I will put forward suggestions for that officer or official under the two remaining subheadings below. One suggestion is to embrace the interagency meeting as an opportunity to get things done rather than a chore to get through. The other is to take a mobile and “expeditionary” approach to the work of relating to one’s counterparts before and after meetings.

### **Meetings, You Got’a Love ‘Em.**

Meetings have a bad reputation, and they deserve much of it. They are, however, unavoidable and, used well, they make for a good interagency process. The convener and Chair, of course, has a special responsibility for the conduct of a meeting, but all who participate can shape the process in a way that makes for a useful meeting and serves their special agency-specific goals. Readers are invited at this point to insert mentally all they may have learned about small group process in professional-development offsites

or management training courses or communications classes in academe. My intent is not to describe the skills needed for effective meetings but rather to put meetings in a positive light, to offer thereby some motivation for using and honing the skills which most of us have been taught or learned on the job.

Meetings best facilitate the very thing which interagency process is supposed to accomplish: They collect or can collect everyone "with a dog in the fight," allowing all to bring their concerns to light, fully air the pros and cons of various options, and work toward a consensus in the U.S. Government's interest. To be sure, issues before "the" interagency do not all come to a meeting table. Nor do they need to. E-mailing and phone-calling, one-on-one conversations and messages, and seriatim polling of concerned agencies do the job well enough when the task is to review issues that are already well-understood and clearly articulated. Anyone who has tried to schedule a meeting knows why we lean so much on asynchronic media like e-mail to get messages back and forth. The reply-all function helps to keep all players informed of one's input. Nevertheless, the scattered comments in an e-mail thread and stop-and-start flow of discussion can create gaps in the coverage that such a process gives to an issue. Doubts about the collective meaning of the approved document, or the draft proposal agreed to, can readily arise when different individuals plug into and out of the discussion with different comments on limited aspects of the total issue.

By comparison, when everyone gathers at a meeting to discuss and decide on something, all comments are available to all participants at the same time, offering the immediate opportunity for anyone to seek a clarification, which all hear at the same

time. All the visual and tonal cues that live face-to-face communication offers work to expose problems (doubt, skepticism, misunderstanding, etc.) that might be missed in serial messages sent over a network with varying distribution. "Side-bar" exchanges between two individuals in a larger addressee list that could have benefited the understanding of the addressees as a whole unfold without visibility to the others absent a meeting. Doubts that might have manifested in a meeting can arise and dissipate in the mind of an individual sitting before a computer work station screen without ever surfacing for others, and thereby working to clarify the matter which prompted the doubt in the first place. In a meeting, the proximate, real-time interaction of individuals around the table can create momentum and consensus in ways that episodic messages are far less suited to do. More than that, meetings can create a sense of solidarity and common purpose, important if the interagency players responsible for reaching a decision are also involved in implementing it or when it comes time to garner the support of others in their various agencies for the agreement they reached as a group. Interagency process is often analogous to negotiating. Even planning for a field operation like the one in Kosovo was more like a negotiation than anything else. Conceived in this way, one would want to have all the parties to the "negotiation" together to ensure that all details were covered, every angle considered, any possible doubts exposed and resolved, and understanding by all parties confirmed.

### **The "Shoe Leather Express."**

At one time, it was fashionable to talk about Management by Walking Around (MBWA). The idea

in management-science circles was that good managers do their jobs best when they get out of their offices, circulate among staff members, and communicate with them directly and on site. The approach described as MBWA applies to interagency process. Each player in that process is an issue-manager and manages issues best when he or she reaches out to counterparts regularly to inform and be informed about the whole set of issues whose management they share in common. There is a penny-wise/pound-foolish approach which limits communication to addressing discreet issues when they come up. This approach seems to save time because it "cuts to the chase" and limits itself to the issue that is up for decision at any given time. Meeting for coffee or in the office of a colleague to compare notes when there are no deadlines driving decisions can seem like a waste of time. I would suggest quite the opposite.

"Down time" is a good time to explore the terrain where issues will come up. Time invested in less directed discussion can identify areas of agreement on basics or clarify basic differences in approach. In either case, each party is better for it, as is the system. Having established in advance of a specific issue, broad areas of agreement with counterparts, one can get down to business and address ways and means when an issue is up for decision. Or, knowing in advance where differences lie, one can think ahead to compromises or workarounds to bridge the differences. The interagency process is an ongoing, seemingly "never-ending" sequence of deliberation and decisionmaking. The cast of characters who play parts in it is relatively invariant. Today's adversaries may be tomorrow's allies. The continuing character of the process puts a premium on practices which enhance continuity and coherence.

A process is not efficient when its participants seem always to be starting from scratch when it comes to taking up a new issue. What I call the "Shoe Leather Express" carries interagency colleagues from one decision to the next by keeping the conversation going on shared areas of responsibility. It minimizes surprises at meetings or as deadlines for decisions draw near. It also promotes a problem-solving attitude toward issues when interagency colleagues work the lulls between crunch times by making each other smart about the subjects they share in common. There is less chance of misunderstanding when it comes time to formulate positions on emergent issues insofar as interlocutors have already come to terms by way of their ongoing communication.

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With these last two comments on meetings and ongoing one-on-one communication with colleagues in the interagency community, I conclude my observations. The common elements throughout the paper are well-reflected in the last two points. "Purposeful communication" might summarize the thread that runs throughout the observations and reflections in this chapter. Communication needs to be inclusive and operate in many directions and at many levels. It should be ongoing and preferably direct. At the same time, it is not an end in itself. Communication supports deliberation which leads to decisions. Decisions should be grounded in our best collective assessment of the facts and a seasoned appreciation of worldviews and perspectives bearing on an issue. At the same time, decisions must be answerable to strategic policy goals.

“The” interagency is neither a thing nor is it merely a process if “process” signifies something routine and bureaucratic. The adversarial view of interagency interaction at least gives it credit for addressing issues of import — ones that matter greatly not only to agencies which participate in interagency deliberations but also to the U.S. Government as a whole. Ultimately, the good of the country is at issue and successful interagency collaboration in Washington and elsewhere can do much to promote the national interest.



## **APPENDIX I**

### **KOSOVO: CONFLICT AND RESPONSE**

#### **A Brief Chronology**

This brief chronology, derived from various sources, highlights events and developments important for understanding the armed conflict in Kosovo at the end of the 1990s and international response to it, including the start of peace support operations in Kosovo. The chronology is meant to serve as background for the discussion in this chapter of U.S. interagency planning for that operation. The chronology does not extend beyond 1999 and the beginning of the mission in Kosovo since the focus of the chapter is the planning process as a case study of interagency coordination and not the Kosovo issue nor the particular plan for Kosovo peace support as such.

- 1974    New constitution for Yugoslavia makes Kosovo an autonomous province.
- 1987    Ethnic unrest (between Kosovar Albanians and Serbs) results in the imposition of martial law in Kosovo.
- 1988    Serbian Republican Assembly (Kosovo was a province of the Serbian republic within the federal structure of Yugoslavia) decides to extend control over Kosovo. Miners in Kosovo strike. Some 10,000 troops and 100 tanks are sent into Kosovo.

- 1989 Serb-dominated government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) dissolves the Kosovo assembly. Ethnic Albanian legislators in the province declare independence.
- 1992 Ethnic Albanians elect Ibrahim Rugova as president of the self-proclaimed Republic of Kosovo.
- 1996 Irregular force called the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) claims responsibility for a number of bombings and attacks against Serbian police officials.
- 1998 **February:** Fighting in Kosovo between Ethnic Albanians and Serbian troops begins.  
**May:** Serb security forces conduct raids throughout Kosovo, destroying homes and villages.  
**October:** The OSCE signs an agreement with the FRY, introducing a ground monitoring presence of some 2,000 observers, the Kosovo Verification Mission (KVM), to verify a cease fire and other terms of the agreement.
- 1999 **January 15:** The bodies of more than 40 ethnic Albanians, apparently executed, are found in the village of Raczak. The international community condemns the massacre.  
**February 6:** Peace talks between the parties under the auspices of the Contact Group (France, Germany, Italy, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States) begin in Rambouillet, France.  
**March 18:** Talks in Rambouillet end when Serbs refuse to sign the draft agreement.

**March 24:** NATO airstrikes against the FRY, to include strikes against FRY forces in Kosovo, begin under Operation ALLIED FORCE (OAF).

**June 9:** FRY agrees to withdrawal all forces (military and police) from Kosovo.

**June 10:** UN Security Council passes Resolution 1244 authorizing administration of the province under the UN Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) and enforcement by means of a NATO-deployed Kosovo Force (KFOR) with other major responsibilities delineated for the OSCE and EU.

**June 12:** KFOR deploys to Kosovo.

**July 25:** UNMIK issues its first Regulation establishing interim civil administration over Kosovo.

## ENDNOTES - CHAPTER 9

1. Katariina Saariluoma, "Operation Allied Force: A Case of Humanitarian Intervention?" *Athena Papers*, Garmisch-Partienkirche, Germany: Partnership for Peace Consortium of Defense Academies and Security Studies Institutes, September 2004, pp. 21-22. As the author points out, the draft agreement provided for a "high-degree of self-governance" through Kosovo's own legislative, executive, and judicial bodies, a police force reflecting the ethnic makeup of Kosovo and harmonization of the interim arrangements under the agreement with Serbian and federal legal frameworks.

2. Michael Dziedzic and Sasha Kishinchand, "The Historical Context of Conflict in Kosovo," in *The Quest for Viable Peace*, Jock Covey, Michael J. Dziedzic, and Leonard R. Hawley, eds., Washington, DC: The United States Institute for Peace, 2005, p. 29. The conditions, as cited by the authors, were: (1) A verifiable halt to Serbian violence and repression against the Albanians; (2) Withdrawal of all Serbian police and military forces from Kosovo; (3) Deployment of an international military force; (4) Return of all refugees and internally displaced persons; and (5) Acceptance of the Rambouillet accords as the basis of a political framework to resolve Kosovo's status.

3. Ben Lovelock, "Securing a Viable Peace: Defeating Militant Extremists—Fourth-Generation Peace Implementation," in Covey, Dziedzic, and Hawley, *The Quest for Viable Peace*, p. 123. The author, a KFOR battalion commander of the UK, describes the security context at the start of KFOR operations as follows: "From the beginning, Kosovo's security situation was volatile and dangerous. Although Serb military and police forces withdrew on schedule, KFOR found Kosovo's public security institutions completely shattered. There were no police, judges, or jails to provide law and order."

4. Hawley, Leonard, and Dennis Skocz, "Advance Political-Military Planning: Laying the Foundation for Achieving Viable Peace," in *The Quest for Viable Peace*, pp. 40-42. Leonard Hawley and I were both involved in several phases of Kosovo political-military planning. The text cited here describes the "question marks" that confronted planners as Operation ALLIED FORCE

(OAF) began: "Ambiguities plagued the effort from the beginning. Political-military planners could not predict which international organization—the United Nations or the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE)—would lead the civilian presence. Nor could they confirm whether NATO would lead the international security presence. Planners could not lay out a detailed timetable with actual milestones for progress. These issues would be analyzed as the advance planning process unfolded throughout the spring of 1999."

5. Hawley, *The Quest for Viable Peace*, p. 45. A little more detail and context are given in the cited text.

6. *Ibid.* "International partners joined the planning process early. As the mission analysis effort unfolded in April, the mission-area teams shared U.S. planning concepts with key allies and other international actors, including the United Nations Secretariat, NATO, and the OSCE."

7. Jock Covey, "The Custodian of the Peace Process," *The Quest for Viable Peace*, p. 82. Covey, the Deputy in the UN's Mission in Kosovo, writes: "In Kosovo, however, we sought from the beginning to achieve a joint planning framework. We aimed not just for a willingness to talk; we needed concrete, joint, routine processes for planning objective-driven operations."

8. Theodore C. Sorenson, *Decisionmaking in the White House: The Olive Branch or the Arrows*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1963, pp. 18-19. Among eight "ideal" steps to be followed in making a decision, Sorenson includes these two: "a canvassing of all possible solutions, with all their shades and variations," and "a list of all possible consequences that flow from each solution." Having such knowledge entails inputs from of a wide-range of players with differing background and operational experience.

9. Halvor A. Hartz and Laura Mercean, with Clint Williamson, "Safeguarding a Viable Peace: Institutionalizing the Rule of Law," *The Quest for Viable Peace*, p. 160.

10. "Introduction," Michael Dziedzic, Robert Oakley, and Eliot M. Godberg, eds., *Policing the New World Disorder: Peace Operations and Public Security*, Washington, DC: National Defense

University Press, 1998, pp. 8-15. Driedzic's summary description of the public security dilemmas that confront a peace support operation in its earliest phase offers insight into the pros and cons of various options, e.g., deploying the military, using international police, and relying on local police forces.

11. Hartz, *The Quest for a Viable Peace*, pp. 168-169. Hartz, a Norwegian police official and the UN's police commissioner for Kosovo in the summer of 1999, notes how much longer it took for the international police force planned for Kosovo to deploy than the 4 months allowed for in the plan. Only the investigative function was transferred from the military (in the British-covered sector of Kosovo) to international police in the 4-month timeframe.

12. Joint Pub 3-0, *Doctrine for Joint Operations*, February 1, 1995, p. V-4. Doctrine advises the "joint" soldier involved in operations other than war to see consensus building as a "primary task" that is "aided by understanding each agency's capabilities and limitations as well as any constraints that may preclude the use of a capability."

13. John Franklin Campbell, *The Foreign Affairs Fudge Factory*, New York: Basic Books, 1971, p. 128. Campbell's acerbic description of the "clearance" process, although 35 years old, aptly captures the complexity of both intra- and interagency coordination as it operates horizontally and vertically through "the" interagency.

14. Graham T. Allison, *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis*, Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1971, p. 177. In this classic study of decisionmaking in the White House in what arguably counts as the paradigm case of decisionmaking under pressure, the author explains that policymakers look for options from subordinates and that the job of subordinates (Indians vs. Chiefs) is to frame alternatives for those up the chain.

15. Allison, p. 171. "Each player [in government decisionmaking] pulls and hauls with the power at his discretion for outcomes that will advance his conception of national, organizational, group, and personal interests."

16. Sorenson, p. 15. "Our society, after all, is founded on diversities and distinctions; free men thrive on inconsistent points

of view; and our government is based on clashing checks and balances.”

17. *Ibid.*, pp. 15-16. Policy conflict/debate surfaces issues for the decisionmaker; conversely, keeping conflict outside the purview of the decisionmaker risks having an issue surprise him/her later.

18. Hawley, *The Quest for Viable Peace*, p. 45.

19. James Q. Wilson, *Bureaucracy: What Government Agencies Do and Why They Do It*, New York: Basic Books, 1989, pp. 93-94. It is part of the State Department bureaucratic culture for its Foreign Service Officers to see themselves as diplomats whose job it is to maintain relationships, foster communication, evince openness, and show cultural sophistication.

20. *Ibid.*, p. 237. A lengthy discussion of the importance of Congress to the federal bureaucracy is summed up with: “No agency is free to ignore the views of Congress.”

# **CHAPTER 10**

## **THE INTERAGENCY ARENA AT THE OPERATIONAL LEVEL: THE CASES NOW KNOWN AS STABILITY OPERATIONS**

**John T. Fishel<sup>1</sup>**

### **DEFINING THE OPERATIONAL LEVEL**

In the early 1980s, the American military discovered (or rediscovered) the intermediate level of war between strategy and tactics—a level that Napoleon had called “grand tactics.” The U.S. Army writers of doctrine chose to describe that level of war, as did their Soviet adversaries, as the operational level. And they chose, again like the Soviets, to call the activities of that level Operational Art. This chapter addresses interagency operations at the operational level in the context of what we now call, “stability operations.”<sup>2</sup> Therefore, we are faced with definitional tasks for both of these terms. We will address stability operations in the next section; here we will focus on the operational level.

The Department of Defense (DoD) defines the operational level as being between the strategic and the tactical and linking the two. It goes further to say that this is the level where campaigns are planned to achieve the objectives of strategy. This is fine as far as it goes, but it hardly goes far enough, especially when we are operating in an interagency context. For the United States, the interagency operational level exists where two or more separate federal agencies plan and conduct operations to achieve strategic objectives. Domestically, this may involve such activities as interdicting illicit



drugs entering the United States. Internationally, it is most commonly seen in the workings of the Country Team in an American Embassy. When discussing other states—especially those with unitary rather than federal systems—we can substitute “national” for federal agencies.

Another way of seeing the interagency operational level is in terms of task forces designed to conduct activities that are generally independent of other governmental activities. That is, these activities are relatively self-contained but designed to achieve larger strategic ends. As such, they are the mid-level building blocks of strategy. By way of contrast, the tactical level focuses on the highly interrelated tasks necessary to achieve operational objectives. Tactical organizations do not function independently or autonomously, operational ones do.

## THE NATURE OF STABILITY OPERATIONS

Even though the entire history of the U.S. military is replete with almost continuous “stability operations” contrasting with less than a dozen “major wars,” the military has yet to fully agree on what to call these operations. And, although it has effective doctrine,<sup>3</sup> it rarely reads it and even more rarely understands and remembers what it reads. In the early 20th century, these operations were known as small wars.<sup>4</sup> In fact, based on the lessons of the small wars in Central America and the Caribbean, the Marine Corps published its *Small Wars Manual* in 1940 on the very eve of the biggest war in history.

After World War II, the United States became engaged in combating what the Soviets called wars of national liberation and we called counterinsurgency.

Counterinsurgency – or COIN – was the term of art/choice until about 1973 when stability operations entered the doctrine. By 1981 the U.S. Army had again changed the name when it published Field Manual (FM) 100-20, *Low Intensity Conflict*.<sup>5</sup> Low intensity conflict (LIC) lasted as part of doctrine for only a decade, and one new edition of FM 100-20, which, although almost completely rewritten to incorporate both formal research and formal lessons learned, retained essentially the same name. One innovation was that it was jointly published with the U.S. Air Force.<sup>6</sup> LIC was also enshrined in federal law with the passage of the Cohen-Nunn Amendment that created the office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict (ASD-SO/LIC) in 1986.

Nevertheless, the shelf life of the term in doctrine was relatively short. By 1993 LIC had been replaced by Operations Other Than War (OOTW).<sup>7</sup> Within 2 years of the appearance of OOTW, joint doctrine had modified the term to read Military Operations Other Than War (MOOTW).<sup>8</sup> By 1997, the Army was not happy with OOTW/MOOTW and had drafted a new FM that returned to the term stability operations, adding support operations to create the acronym, SASO.

None of these terms is really quite accurate since they all address situations where combat is either a very real probability or a reality. As the facetious saying went, “I never saw anyone killed by a low intensity bullet!” Instead, what we are talking about are civil-military operations that are conducted in environments where one or more potential adversaries operate in asymmetric relationships with their adversaries.

In 1992, Max Manwaring and this writer published an article in the journal, *Small Wars and Insurgencies*

entitled, "Insurgency and Counterinsurgency: Toward a New Analytical Approach," based on research conducted since 1984.<sup>9</sup> In that article we detailed quantitative research that identified seven dimensions that together determined the outcome of the 43 insurgencies that had involved Western powers since the end of World War II. Those seven dimensions are:

1. Military Actions of the Intervening Power;
2. Support Actions of the Intervening Power;
3. Host Government Legitimacy;
4. Degree of Outside Support to Insurgents;
5. Actions versus Subversion;
6. Host Government Military Actions; and,
7. Unity of Effort.

Although not all dimensions were individually statistically significant, the entire model correctly explained the outcome in 88 percent of the cases (38 out of 43), with a multiple R square of 0.90 and a significance level of  $<.001$ .<sup>10</sup> Of the five outlying cases, three were near statistical ties, while the remaining two were explained by factors unique to those cases.

While the Unity of Effort dimension was not individually statistically significant in the original quantitative study, subsequent qualitative research clearly demonstrated its importance. A study of nine cases of peace operations clearly demonstrated that Unity of Effort was one of two key dimensions about which all others revolved.<sup>11</sup> Unity of Effort, of course, is the aim of all interagency coordination.

The significance of this body of research that spans more than 2 decades is that the policymaker and/or operator who ignores the dimensions of the model is likely to fail in his efforts. Not that any one dimension is necessarily, of itself, critical to success or failure in

stability operations, but the side of the conflict that better addresses those dimensions is the likely victor. And, as was demonstrated by our research into peace operations, Unity of Effort is, indeed, a key to success.

It is important to note here that the research that produced the model has been incorporated into U.S. Joint and Army doctrine.<sup>12</sup> Despite this simple fact, it appears highly probable that institutional (institutionalized) learning has not really taken place.<sup>13</sup> The result is that it has been necessary for the United States to learn the same lessons again and again, as if each new stability operation were a situation that had never been encountered before. This chapter will examine that phenomenon in a series of case studies of interagency coordination in stability operations from the late 1940s to the present.

## **A BRIEF OVERVIEW OF THE CASES**

Six cases are addressed; each attempts to show both successful and unsuccessful aspects of interagency coordination designed to achieve unity of effort. The first case examines what came to be British counterinsurgency practice born in the crucible of the Malayan Emergency. The degree to which the British approach is transferable is an open question. Vietnam, the second case, is generally an example of a command and control structure—both military and political—that was doomed from the beginning. Nevertheless, the Civil Operations Revolutionary Development Support (CORDS) structure showed what could be accomplished in both political and military terms at the operational level. Military and political veterans of the Vietnam experience were the leaders of the U.S. effort in El Salvador during the 1980s. Even without full

unity of command, the several U.S. elements and their Salvadoran allies crafted structures and procedures that facilitated attaining unity of effort across the board. Those lessons were not lost in the “drug war,” and the premier institutions for monitoring and interdiction of the drug flow to the United States through the Caribbean air and sea routes is the highly innovative Joint Interagency Task Force-South (JIATF-S). With all these lessons learned (along with some others such as Somalia) the United States leaped into Iraq and tried to restore it to political, economic, and security health with an authority structure little, if at all, better than the one used in Vietnam. While the Iraq insurgency was unfolding, the long-term insurgency in Colombia was beginning to take a turn for the better. Following a suggestion from U.S. Southern Command, President Alfonso Uribe created the Coordinating Center for Integrated Action (CCAI) and made it his vehicle to achieve the required unity of effort to defeat the insurgency. The lessons of these six cases—hard won, and not without backsliding—lead to conclusions about how and why governments learn or fail to learn from their own past or the experiences of others.

### **The Malayan Emergency and British Practice.**

Shortly after the end of World War II, the British Empire, in particular, and European colonialism in general, was challenged by a series of insurgencies. One of the earliest and longest fought was the Malayan Emergency which began in June 1948. Even though it was a rebellion almost entirely of an ethnic Chinese minority among a majority Malay population, the insurgency lasted for 12 years until it finally ended in 1960, 3 years after the new state of Malaya (now

known as Malaysia) became independent. For the first 3 years of the rebellion, the outcome was as uncertain as the structure used to fight it. In 1951, however, the tide turned with the appointment of Lieutenant General (Ret.) Sir Harold Briggs as the civilian Director of Operations, working directly for the British High Commissioner (also a civilian).<sup>14</sup>

Unfortunately, Briggs was not given "the clear-cut authority that he needed if he was to pull things in Malaya together successfully. . . ." He also knew that "to some extent he would be in an anomalous position. Crucially, he could not really give orders to anyone, since although he was charged with bringing the police and armed forces together in one unified command," the Chief of Police retained the right of appeal to the High Commissioner, and both the military and police leadership could go over the High Commissioner to their own higher headquarters in London.<sup>15</sup>

Briggs moved swiftly and developed what came to be known as the "Briggs Plan." Although its substantive objectives were largely tactical and operational rather than strategic, the critical component of the plan was its focus on detailed coordination and cooperation. At the Federal level in Malaya, Briggs instituted two committees with himself as the head. The first was the Federal War Council which was comprised of all the key security players, particularly the military and police leaders and their deputies. This was designed to be a flexible vehicle for policymaking and resource allocation. The second committee was the State War Executive Committee which was responsible for all government administration and was designed to interact and coordinate with the Federal War Council. Below this level were Circle (police jurisdictions) and District War Executive Committees. Generally, these

committees operated within the Police Circles and the civil districts. Despite continuing bureaucratic problems, the committee system worked relatively well.<sup>16</sup> "[A]t the local level, the improvement was immense as the philosophy worked down through the echelons of command, so that in practically all locations Army and Police set up joint ops rooms, usually in the local Police station, and gradually the officers involved learnt the need to share intelligence first and fast at this level."<sup>17</sup>

As Field Marshal Bernard Law Montgomery had succinctly written to British Colonial Secretary Oliver Lyttelton in 1951:

Dear Lyttelton,

*Malaya*

We must have a plan.

Secondly, we must have a man.

When we have a plan and a man, we shall succeed: not otherwise.

Yours Sincerely,

Montgomery (F.M.)<sup>18</sup>

Although Briggs had given the British the plan, he was not the man. Moreover, what was missing from both Montgomery's analysis and the Briggs Plan was a strategic objective. Both failings were remedied at the beginning of 1952 with the appointment of active duty General Sir Gerald Templar as British High Commissioner to Malaya. "His brief from the Government began with the statement that 'The policy of Her Majesty's Government in Great Britain is that Malaya should in due course become a fully self-governing nation'."<sup>19</sup> Here, then, was the strategic

objective: an independent Malaya (where, incidentally, the majority Malays would be the dominant political force thus further isolating the ethnic Chinese communist rebels). Thus the first necessary (but insufficient) condition for successful unity of effort was fulfilled.

Templar's instructions went even farther and fully resolved one of the problems that had plagued Briggs — the lack of necessary authority. "[N]ot only will you fulfill the normal functions of the High Commissioner but you will assume complete operational command over all the Armed forces assigned to operations in the Federation."<sup>20</sup> Thus Templar was, at the same time, High Commissioner, Director of Operations, and General Officer Commanding (GOC), centralizing civil and military authority and achieving unity of command. Three weeks after his arrival, he had already decided to reorganize the headquarters of the counterterrorist effort, merging "the functions of the Federal War Council with those of the Federal Executive Council, which will then become the sole instrument of the expanded membership of the council."<sup>21</sup>

With these actions, the British had a strategic objective, a plan to achieve it, and a man in charge. They had achieved effective interagency coordination for unity of effort in the classical manner. In accordance with the principle of war, they had attained unity of command, giving the commander — Templar — the authority he needed and holding him responsible for his actions. As noted above, 5 years later the strategic objective was achieved, and 3 years after that, the war itself was over.



## **Vietnam – Or How Generally Not to Conduct Stability Operations But With One Bright and Shining Success Story Now (Mostly) Forgotten.**

The joke told shortly after the Vietnam War ended was that the United States did not fight one 12-year-long war; it fought 12 individual wars, each one a year long! There was much truth in the joke. Among the truths found, there is the lack of a single, clear, political-military objective that could have provided a necessary, if insufficient, condition for the unity of effort required for victory. Indeed, the late Colonel Harry Summers, author of *On Strategy*, stated in a 1996 interview that he had counted some 22 different U.S. strategic objectives in Vietnam, some of which were clearly mutually exclusive. Thus, if we didn't know what we were fighting for, how could we possibly organize to achieve victory? How would we even know what victory looked like?

There is little wonder, then, that the American organization to fight the war in Vietnam was convoluted, at best. In no way was the principle of unity of command even approached, let alone attained. Consider, first, the military command structure. The U.S. Military Assistance Command-Vietnam (MACV) was nominally in command of the entire American military effort. However, the United States had non-Vietnamese allies who went by the name of Free World Forces. These were loosely integrated under the leadership of the MACV commander (COMUSMACV). Then there were the South Vietnamese military under the independent command of the Republic of Vietnam (RVN) president and the Joint General Staff. They "coordinated" with MACV. Under MACV were I and II Field Force, into which some of the Free World Forces

allies were integrated as were the U.S. Marines. The latter, however, clearly had their own operational area largely in I Corps Tactical Zone, where the Marines followed an entirely different strategy from the Army. Meanwhile, the U.S. Navy and the Coast Guard (USCG) operated in the rivers and littoral waters of Vietnam "in support of" MACV. Both the Navy and Air Force operated under the command of the U.S. Commander in Chief Pacific (USCINCPAC) in Hawaii. To top this off, U.S. military advisors to the Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) operated directly under MACV command and control but not under the two Field Forces.

Additional military complications came from Washington where ". . . there were micromanaged efforts from the Oval Office, including selection and approval of bombing targets in North Vietnam."<sup>22</sup> To these were added the fact that American civilian policy in Vietnam, including the activities of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), were implemented by the American Embassy under the nominal authority of the ambassador. Exactly how much control the ambassador had over the CIA station chief, however, is anybody's guess, but based on much reporting and a large literature, it is safe to say that it was not much. Thus, civilian and military efforts in Vietnam were connected only very loosely as were military actions with the Army and Marines pursuing entirely different operational concepts, while the Air Force and the Navy did not operate under the command of MACV. As Sam Sarkesian succinctly puts it, "The CIA, Marines, and the U.S. ambassadorial complex all had their own view of the proper strategy."<sup>23</sup>

Although the Vietnam War generally provides negative lessons regarding interagency coordination at both the strategic and operational levels, one aspect of how the war was conducted is not only positive but provides an organizational model that can be adapted widely. This was the organization known as Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support, called by its acronym – CORDS.

CORDS was the creation of Ambassador Robert Komer who became the first Deputy COMUSMACV-CORDS. Komer took all the existing pacification and development programs and pulled them together under MACV control. On May 1, 1967, CORDS came into being, with Komer reporting directly to General William Westmoreland, COMUSMACV. "CORDS was a dramatic change from business as usual, incorporating personnel from the CIA, the U.S. Information Agency (USIA), USAID, the State Department, the White House, and all of the military services." In addition to Komer, "... each of the four American corps commanders had a deputy for pacification; the 'cutting edge' of CORDS, however, was the unified civil-military advisory teams in all 250 districts and 44 provinces."<sup>24</sup>

As former CIA Director William Colby (who had led the Phoenix Program, a major component under CORDS) wrote later:

President [Nguyen Van] Thieu quickly understood that a major strategy of pacification required the kind of unified management structure the Americans had finally produced in the CORDS machinery. In response, he set up a Central Pacification and Development Council to direct the campaign and the work of all the Ministries and agencies of the government involved in it. . . . All of the government ministries, including Defense plus the Joint General Staff, were represented in the council, so that its directives were specific and binding on all the local organs involved in the pacification campaign.<sup>25</sup>

The success of CORDS was to achieve unity of effort by creating interagency unity of command at the operational level for the American involvement in the pacification campaign. President Thieu's parallel action achieved unity of command on the Vietnamese side and the parallel organizations worked effectively together to achieve a significant degree of unity of effort.

Even though CORDS is well remembered in the Special Operations community and those who have thought seriously about stability operations and despite its mention in both Joint and Army doctrine, the lesson has never been internalized by either the conventional military or by the civil bureaucracy. As both Richard Downie and John Nagl point out, the Army has great difficulty becoming a true learning organization—even when all the necessary mechanisms are in place. American civil bureaucracy has even greater difficulty since it has no built in “lessons learned” functions or procedures. Thus, there has been no effort within the civil government to formally capture the lessons of CORDS and, therefore, unlike the military, there is no institutional memory of what it was or what it accomplished.

### **El Salvador – Or How to Get it Right.**

El Salvador, from 1982 until January 1992 with the signing of the Peace Accords, provides a particularly good example of a mostly institutionalized interagency coordination process at the operational level. The adverb “mostly” is employed because the effective leadership provided by the American ambassadors and military group (USMILGP) commanders cannot be

guaranteed either by structure or national direction. In El Salvador, both the United States and El Salvador were fortunate that three consummate senior diplomats—Ambassadors Dean Hinton, Thomas Pickering, and Edwin Corr—led the embassy from 1982 through 1988. They were ably supported by USMILGP commanders, Colonels John Waghelstein, Joseph Stringham, Jim Steele, and John Ellerson. Because of this leadership, and the direction and structures in place, the Country Team concept effectively organized the American war effort and prodded, pushed, and hauled the Salvadorans to achieve a political victory.

Ever since the presidency of John F. Kennedy, each American ambassador has been armed with a letter of appointment from the President that charges him with authority over all U.S. Government agencies operating in the country to which he is accredited, and holds him responsible for their actions. The only exception to this authority occurs when major U.S. military operations are being conducted in the country. This exception does not apply to military exercises or even to expanded security assistance as was undertaken in El Salvador. During the war in El Salvador, this ambassadorial authority was never challenged by any of the commanders-in-chief (CINCs) at U.S. Southern Command (SOUTHCOM), the nominal superiors of the MILGP commanders. Generals Wallace Nutting, Paul Gorman, John Galvin, Frederick Woerner, Jr., and Maxwell Thurman all recognized the primacy of the ambassador and that their role was one of support.

Early on, several elements coalesced to increase the unity of the American support effort. As in Malaya, the first such element was a plan. This was the famous Woerner Report, drafted by a team led by then Brigadier General Woerner, which provided the blueprint for

U.S. military support to the El Salvador Armed Forces (ESAF) from late 1981 until the end of the war. Second, was the man, Ambassador Dean Hinton – and his two immediate successors, four successive subordinate MILGP commanders, and supporting CINCs – who successfully orchestrated the American interagency effort. Third, again as in Malaya, was the clear articulation of the political objectives to be achieved. These were the survival and success of democratic government in El Salvador and the subordination of the ESAF to legitimate civilian government control.

The other side of the Salvadoran equation was the Government of El Salvador and the ESAF. Not only were they the object of the U.S. support effort but they were critical participants in achieving unity of effort. Three Salvadoran presidents – Alvaro Magaña, Jose Napoleón Duarte, and Alfredo Cristiani – played key leadership roles. So, too, did Defense Minister General Eugenio Vides Casanova and a number of his subordinates, including future generals Rene Emilio Ponce and Mauricio Vargas. In addition, Vice Minister of Public Security Colonel Reynaldo Lopez Nuila led the effort to move the police from the defense ministry to the interior ministry.

The fact that the Salvadoran war was one in which the United States did not control the ally it was trying to assist makes it, to some degree, analogous with Vietnam. El Salvador, however, was faced with a war that was almost entirely internal, having at most a very small conventional component. It also had the good fortune to have addressed the real structural grievances of the opposition (both violent and nonviolent) even before armed combat broke out. These facts did not make for a problem with easy solutions but they did contribute to the ultimate success of the government of El Salvador (GOES) and the United States.

John Waghelstein, who commanded the USMILGP while Dean Hinton was the ambassador, refers to himself and his Country Team colleagues as “Hintonistas.”<sup>26</sup> The term clearly suggests the close working relationship among the interagency players in the embassy. One incident related by Waghelstein clearly illustrates just how that relationship worked. For the 1982 elections the ESAF was tasked to provide security and established a number of ad hoc “Special Intelligence” units. Unfortunately, these were not returned to their primary missions after the election:

One signals unit had a particularly unsavory reputation but the ESAF headquarters, as was too often the case, proved unable or unwilling to get it under control. Salvadoran law proscribed ESAF from operating out of uniform but as long as this unit operated out of uniform there was little chance of catching them and making a case. . . . What the Embassy needed was some irrefutable evidence that would give us the leverage needed to shut them down. Eventually the Salvadorans’ penchant for excess gave it to us.

We received word that this unit’s nightriders had, on suspicion of subversive activities, arrested four teenagers including the son of a retired Salvadoran National Guardsman. The former Guardsman, who worked for the U.S. Embassy Security Office, recognized the arresting officer and reported the incident to the Embassy. The resulting confrontation is instructive regarding the connection between human rights and security assistance and the influence the latter provides. In this case, it was more like a club than a lever. Within 2 hours of receiving the information, the ambassador called the minister of defense and sent me to speak with the [Army] chief of staff and my U.S. Army signal advisor was dispatched to speak to the commander of the unit involved. Our message was clear and brief:

- Put the kids back on the street immediately;

- End all clandestine law enforcement operations;
- Disband the unit and reassign its members.

All three of us explicitly linked a current, million-dollar signal upgrade project to compliance with our demands. Within the hour the teenagers were released and that particular group of nightriders went out of business.<sup>27</sup>

The incident demonstrates that the Country Team had a solid set of procedures to react to a situation and coordinate interagency action to deal with it, all within the parameters of unity of command under the ambassador.

Another aspect of interagency coordination in the Country Team was the continuing development of the National Plan. Waghelstein notes that Ambassador Hinton took great pains to push the idea of a national plan that involved the Salvadoran interagency community. Hinton used the occasion of official visitors to support this idea which was adopted by the GOES. One result was the establishment of the National Commission for Reconstruction (CONARA) which worked with the Ministries of Health, Public Works, Agriculture, Planning, and Education to coordinate reconstruction.<sup>28</sup> CONARA, however, was plagued by corruption and inefficiency; as a result, President Duarte gave a larger role to the ESAF while at the same time expanding the National Plan to all 14 departments.<sup>29</sup> This expansion was a “bridge too far,” and lack of resources, coupled with the effects of the 1986 earthquake that leveled parts of the capital and diverted reconstruction funds from the rural departments, caused this expansion to be less than wholly successful. Nevertheless, USMILGP worked closely with USAID to coordinate American support to the project. This included the assignment of a Special



Forces captain to USAID as the liaison officer to make the coordination happen.<sup>30</sup>

The most successful version of the National Plan was also the simplest. Ambassador Edwin Corr encouraged President Duarte to put reconstruction funds directly into the hands of the mayors of the municipalities of the 14 departments on the theory that local people knew what they needed better than the national bureaucracy.<sup>31</sup> It also had the effect of “cutting out all the sticky-fingered middlemen. This solution also put the . . . [U.S. military advisors] and the USAID people in direct contact with the projects, thereby increasing U.S. oversight and plan efficiency.”<sup>32</sup>

What El Salvador clearly demonstrates is that the Country Team concept can work effectively where the United States is supporting host nation stability operations. What made it so successful here, was that the three ambassadors representing the U.S. President took their role—as defined in their letter of appointment—seriously and acted as “commanders” of all the U.S. Government agencies operating in El Salvador. At no time was there any doubt among the Americans or the Salvadorans that there was only one U.S. voice, and that was the voice of the ambassador. The Country Team concept works when it is seen as the incarnation of unity of command. Interagency coordination, then, takes place to implement the policies articulated by the ambassador.

### **JIATF-SOUTH: A Story of Evolutionary Innovation.**

In 1986, President Ronald Reagan issued a National Security Decision Directive (NSDD) in which he declared that narcotrafficking was a national security threat. It also authorized the Secretary of Defense

to take measures that would “enable U. S. military forces to support counternarcotics efforts more actively. . . .”<sup>33</sup> In August 1989, President George H. W. Bush issued National Security Directive (NSD)-18 which reiterated President Reagan’s declaration and gave DoD the authority to “expand support of U.S. counternarcotics efforts and to permit DoD personnel to conduct training for host government personnel and operational support activities anywhere in the Andean Region.”<sup>34</sup> Out of these brief policy statements, and the Defense Authorization Act of 1989 which made DoD the lead agency for air and sea drug interdiction, came a greatly expanded role for DoD in counterdrug operations. In the process, several new organizations were established.

On the West coast of the United States, Joint Task Force 5 (JTF-5) was established, while its sister organization, JTF-4, began to operate out of Key West, Florida. Later, JTF-6 was created at Fort Bliss, Texas. JTF-South was established at Headquarters USSOUTHCOM in Panama. Each of these JTFs played a key role in what was being called the drug war. JTFs 4 and 5 were responsible primarily for seaborne interdiction in the Caribbean and coastal Pacific waters, respectively. JTF-6 supported federal, state, and local law enforcement on the Mexican border. JTF-South was responsible for monitoring drug movements from South America into the areas of responsibility of JTFs 4 and 5, and providing operational support to counterdrug activities in the Andean Ridge.

Each JTF consisted of multiservice U.S. military forces operating under the command relationships established by the Goldwater-Nichols Act of 1986. This gave each JTF commander Operational Control over the forces assigned to him and meant that he

had the authority to direct those forces and to task organize them. In other words, he could attach an Army element to a Navy or Air Force command, and direct the joint force to carry out a mission. He also had the authority to relieve a nonperforming commander. Logistical support for the JTF could be tasked to an individual service component by the unified command commander in whose area of responsibility the JTF was operating. In short, the JTFs operated with effective unity of command—a result of Goldwater-Nichols implementation.

There was, however, an interagency component to the JTFs. JTF-South, in particular, had liaison officers from the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) and Customs serving with it in Panama. There were Coast Guard liaison officers as well. Moreover, JTF-4 was commanded by a USCG Vice Admiral from February 1989 until April 1991. After that, however, JTF-4 went under U.S. Navy command where it remained through the transition to a new status as Joint Interagency Task Force—East (JIATF-E) on April 7, 1994. On this same date, JTFs 5 and South were also converted to JIATFs. In January 1996, a USCG admiral became the Director of JIATF-E, and on March 1, 1999, JIATF-S merged with JIATF-E at the Key West location. The newly merged organization took the name, JIATF-S, and has continued to the present to operate with a USCG admiral as its Director.

JIATF-S is a true interagency organization operating with unity of command under its Director. It has Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine, and Coast Guard components from the military services (and two departments—DoD and the Department of Homeland Security [DHS]) along with other DoD and DHS elements including the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA), Naval Criminal

Investigative Service, National Security Agency, and U.S. Customs Service. DEA and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) from the Department of Justice are both represented. It is understood that the Director has Operational Control of all of these elements. JIATF-S reports to the Commander, U.S. Southern Command who exercises Combatant Command over it.

JIATF-S is also a multinational organization. France, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom (UK) provide aircraft, ships, and liaison officers to the JIATF, while the flag officer of the Netherlands Forces Caribbean commands a JIATF task group. In addition, there are liaison officers assigned from Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, and Venezuela.

James Carafano of the Heritage Foundation states that, "The JIATF South succeeds because it does something the federal government rarely does well, if at all: it plays well with others."<sup>35</sup> Carafano argues that JIATF-S works because the agencies involved have little choice. But here this writer takes issue with him. The real reason JIATF-S works is that it is structurally an organization that has unity of command. The Director is a commander with the authority to hire and fire, as well as to task organize and direct actions. As a result, JIATF-S has a full range of standard operating procedures that are practiced on a regular basis. And, with regard to the participating European navies, it is worth noting that they are all NATO countries with a 56-year history of operating together under common standard operating procedures and command relationships that closely approximate the American version of Operational Control.

## **Iraq – Or What Happens When We Forget What We Have Learned and Have to “Reinvent the Wheel.”**

The search for unity of effort in Iraq is, unfortunately, reminiscent of the problems of Vietnam.<sup>36</sup> On the positive side, this does not apply to the command and direction of military forces. In Iraq, there is unity of military command both with U.S. and coalition forces. Goldwater-Nichols has been institutionalized and internalized by American military leaders at all levels. American military practice tends to carry over to North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) allies and non-NATO coalition members whose leaders have gone to U.S. military courses and have led their troops in combined exercises with the Americans over a relatively long period. The most difficult problems of military unity of effort revolved around the fact that for much of 2004, American military leadership was shared among three 3-star Army generals under the command of U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) Commander General John Abizaid. Although Lieutenant General Ricardo Sanchez was the commander of U.S. ground forces in Iraq, having two other commanders of equal rank ostensibly subordinate to him made for a degree of confusion. The problem was remedied when General George Casey (with his 4-stars) replaced Sanchez as commander of U.S. and coalition forces in Iraq.

Neither has the problem been one of command, control, or coordination with the Iraqi forces since we have been in the process of creating them, equipping them, and training them. Rather, the problems with those forces have more to do with the dimension of legitimacy than with that of unity of effort. No, the problems of unity of effort do not have much relation to military or even security force command and control.

The central problem of unity of effort for the United States and the Coalition has been that no one American is in charge of the American effort. This was true from the initial planning for the war through the moment that Ambassador Paul (Jerry) Bremer took charge of the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) to December 2005.

Although General Tommy Franks makes a strong case that post-conflict reconstruction was included in the planning process for Operation IRAQI FREEDOM, he does not dispel the conclusion that it was not solidly embedded in his war plans.<sup>37</sup> Rather, as a 2002 British memorandum to Prime Minister Tony Blair put it, "A post-war occupation of Iraq could lead to a protracted and costly nation-building exercise. . . . As already made clear, the U.S. military plans are virtually silent on this point."<sup>38</sup>

Before the CPA was established, post-conflict planning and execution was in the hands of the Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance (ORHA) under the direction of retired Army Lieutenant General Jay Garner. ORHA was a DoD dependency and was caught in the middle of some highly publicized fights within the Bush Administration about the nature of the reconstruction process. ORHA, however, was not subordinate to CENTCOM during the planning period which made coordination within DoD problematic. When Garner and the office moved to the theater, they did come under CENTCOM but not directly under the commander. Instead, they were subordinated to the Land Component Commander (one of three 3-stars). As a result, Garner had much difficulty getting a hearing for the things he felt were important. The positive aspect of this command relationship was that ORHA was structurally part of CENTCOM which

made unity of command possible even if the command was focused away from what was quickly becoming the central problem of the war.

At that point, the picture shifted. The CPA under Ambassador Bremer replaced ORHA. The CPA was an odd duck of an organization. It belonged to DoD; Bremer was subordinate to Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld. However, the CPA was not part of CENTCOM, and Bremer was not subordinate to General Abizaid. Equally important was that neither Abizaid nor his principal subordinates like Lieutenant General Sanchez who commanded all U.S. military forces in Iraq, were subordinate to Bremer. Yet, Bremer was responsible for the reconstruction—political, economic, and physical—of Iraq, a mission that it was impossible to carry out without the full support of Coalition military forces. As in Vietnam, there was no unity of command within the theater. So, even though there was little or no conflict reported between Bremer and Sanchez, there is little evidence that any kind of effective unity of effort was achieved. Indeed, the creation of the CPA as an independent entity was clearly a regression from the relatively clear command relationship between CENTCOM and ORHA.

The demise of the CPA following the creation of the Iraqi interim authority at the end of June 2004 only further complicated the interagency coordination picture. The senior American civilian was now the U.S. ambassador (initially John Negroponte—very senior, very tough, very competent) but without any authority over U.S. and Coalition military forces. The ambassador was, and remains, equal to the commander of forces in Iraq whether that was Lieutenant General Sanchez or General George Casey. The additional complication was due to the fact that whereas under the CPA civil-

military conflicts could be adjudicated by the Secretary of Defense, since the departure of the CPA the only person who could adjudicate those conflicts became the President. The consequences of this remain unclear, but they are certainly less than optimal.

Another problem for interagency coordination is that, unlike Vietnam, there has not been any American agency comparable to CORDS. Thus there have been no simple means of creating task organizations to undertake combined security and reconstruction missions. Civilian agencies from non-DoD departments did not work for General Casey, and military forces did not work for the U.S. ambassador. At the same time, the Iraqi government has had no incentive to create the kind of CORDS parallel structure established by Vietnamese President Thieu. The outcome of all of this has been a structure that makes interagency coordination more difficult than it needs to be resulting in very questionable unity of effort.<sup>39</sup>

### **Colombia – CCAI: How President Uribe Took a U.S. Initiative and Made it his Own.**

The final case harkens back to El Salvador in terms of the American structure for interagency coordination but enters new territory with the host nation response. In Colombia, the American ambassador – as per his letter of appointment – is responsible for all actions of the U.S. Government (and U.S. Government contractors) operating in country. This includes a very much expanded USMILGP, the CIA station, the narcotics assistance section (NAS), and the DEA, among others. Included in the USMILGP is a Civil Affairs team from SOUTHCOM.

The Colombian insurgency has bedeviled that country for more than 40 years (60+ if one includes



the early stages of the *Violencia*). In that time, multiple governments have sought to deal with it in a variety of ways ranging from suppression to accommodation to addressing “root causes.” The last effort at accommodation was that of the administration of President Andrés Pastrana who ceded a huge zone of the country to the guerrillas of the *Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia* (FARC). At the end of his term, President Pastrana recognized the failure of this policy of appeasement and turned to suppression.

Concurrent with these efforts was the attempt to address the “root causes” of Colombia’s insurgency. Called Plan Colombia, this was a multiyear, \$7.5 billion program, \$4.9 billion of which was to be financed by Colombia and \$2.6 billion by international donors. The U.S. share was \$1.3 billion, about \$1 billion in military assistance and the remaining \$300 million in development assistance. At least \$1 billion in development assistance was to come from the European Union (EU). While the United States and Colombia have more than met their commitments, the EU has been less forthcoming. Unfortunately, Plan Colombia during the Pastrana administration was tied to the failed policy of accommodation, hence its results had little impact on either the insurgency or narcotrafficking.

The election of Alvaro Uribe as President in May 2002 changed the nature of the counterinsurgency in Colombia. President Uribe maintained Plan Colombia but tied it to a new military plan called Plan Patriota, designed to defeat the FARC. The military plan was to take back from the guerrillas areas of the country that had either been ceded to them as part of Pastrana’s negotiating strategy or that they had simply occupied. Some of these areas were under the control of the other insurgent group, the *Ejercito de Liberacion Nacional* (ELN),

while others were controlled by illegal *Autodefensas* (the so-called paramilitaries or AUI). With regard to the latter, Uribe began an apparently successful effort to negotiate their disbanding.

As all these strategic moves were taking place, the Civil Affairs section of the SOUTHCOM operations directorate proposed an initiative to establish a Colombian interagency organization “capable of synchronizing national level efforts to reestablish governance” in areas that had been under FARC, ELN, or AUI control.<sup>40</sup> Civil Affairs officers attached to the MILGP in Colombia presented the concept to the Minister of Defense who liked it and made it the basis for his proposal to President Uribe in February 2004. Needless to say, the concept had been fully vetted in SOUTHCOM and the embassy, and both the commander and the ambassador totally supported the concept.

President Uribe accepted the proposal and established the Coordination Center for Integrated Action (CCAI) with one of his senior advisors and closest associates, Luis Alfonso Hoyos, as its Director. Members of the Board of Directors include Vice Minister of Defense Andres Peñate, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Freddy Padilla, and 12 other senior level representatives of key government ministries. The Board meets weekly, reporting directly to the President.<sup>41</sup>

CCAI is staffed full time by representatives of 13 government ministries and five supporting agencies, including both defense ministry personnel and military officers. The American embassy is also represented at CCAI by a USAID official and a Civil Affairs officer assigned to the USMILGP. CCAI’s first major planning activity was a senior leader seminar and planning

session held from May 8-10, 2004, which developed an economic, social development, and security plan to reestablish long-term governance in southern Colombia. In addition to the President, seminar participants included four ministers (including the Minister of Defense), four other cabinet level civilians, both Vice Ministers of Defense, the Commander of the Colombian Armed Forces, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the commanders of the three military services and the National Police. Among the U.S. participants were Ambassador William Wood and General James T. Hill, Commander of U.S. Southern Command.<sup>42</sup>

Implementation of this plan was sufficiently successful that planning was expanded to address a full seven conflictive zones throughout the country. This plan was addressed at an off-site planning session in Washington at the Center for Hemispheric Defense Studies from March 28-31, 2005.

As President Uribe has developed CCAI, it is the ideal operational instrument for winning the peace in Colombia's counterinsurgency. First, it is a vehicle designed to achieve a specific strategic objective, that of reestablishing legitimate governance over zones formerly controlled by insurgents or the AUI. Second, its Director, Luis Alfonso Hoyos, has the authority he requires to direct the ministries and agencies involved to carry out the plan. For this, the president holds him accountable. And, third, CCAI brings together all the relevant stakeholders to participate in the planning process thereby ensuring "buy in"; this includes the American embassy, firmly under the direction of the ambassador, with the full support of U.S. Southern Command.

## CONCLUSION

When this project began, it did not include any formal hypotheses. Rather, it was developed around six cases that could illustrate the range of issues for interagency coordination and unity of effort at the operational level. The cases were selected largely in terms of their success or failure in achieving unity of effort and not so much in terms of their degree of success in terms of the overall strategic objective. By these criteria, JIATF-S is highly successful in achieving operational unity of effort regardless of its ability to affect the flow of illicit drugs into the United States.

Prior explorations of the unity of effort dimension suggested that, if it were possible, it was desirable to have that particular subset of unity of effort called unity of command. However, there obviously were many instances where unity of command was not possible, and, therefore, one would often have to settle for unity of effort brought about by various mechanisms of interagency coordination. In addition, especially with respect to stability operations, there is most often a multinational aspect that complicates the achievement of unity of effort regardless of whether or not there is unity of command at any level.

The examination of these six cases results in one obvious conclusion. Where there was unity of command, there was unity of effort and effective interagency coordination, not otherwise. Unity of command on the U.S. side of a multinational stability operation also made multinational unity of effort more likely and easier to achieve.

The Malayan Emergency clearly demonstrates the importance of unity of command but it also shows the criticality of the concept of the objective. Without a

strategic objective, the best operational plan had little likelihood of mission success. Nor would General Templar have accomplished his mission or achieved so high a degree of unity of effort without the strategic objective of an independent Malaya. Given that objective, the Briggs Plan to coordinate operations and tactical actions, and Templar with full authority, the Malayan Emergency ended well.

Vietnam, by contrast, demonstrates that the lack of a clear objective, confused and overlapping chains of command, and lack of authority on the ground make it difficult at best to attain unity of effort within the American government let alone with our allies. The establishment of CORDS shows what can be done to effect solid interagency coordination when a position of authority is created and the several involved agencies understand who is the boss. When Ambassador Robert Komer and his successors spoke, they knew they would be backed up by COMUSMACV. That fact made it easier for the Vietnamese to construct a parallel organization with similar authority, and meant that the Deputy Commander for CORDS only had to coordinate with his Vietnamese counterpart to achieve unity of effort for the pacification program. Unfortunately, the U.S. Government has never internalized the lessons of CORDS—neither in the military as a whole nor in the State Department.

Ambassador David Passage characterizes interagency coordination in both the Country Team and in Washington as “a mess,”<sup>43</sup> despite the fact that as *Chargé d’Affaires* of the American embassy in El Salvador between the departure of Ambassador Thomas Pickering and the arrival of Ambassador Edwin Corr, he filled the commander role brilliantly. Thus, the El Salvador and Colombia cases demonstrate

the effectiveness of the ambassadorial appointment letter and Country Team concept for achieving unity of command among American agencies. Given ambassadors who take their role of directing all U.S. Government activity in the country to which they are accredited seriously, then the authority provided by the appointment letter and the Country Team mechanism serves well to bring about unity of action to achieve a defined strategic objective.

The evolution of JIATF-S suggests that the Joint Interagency Task Force, whose Director is, in fact, a commander, is an appropriate organization to coordinate the activity of many interagency players. It is of note that so far, at least, all JIATF directors have been military – either Navy or Coast Guard. But there is no reason that the next director of a JIATF, either already in existence or to be created for some future purpose, could not be drawn from a civilian agency or department having the requisite expertise needed for the mission.

Iraq suggests that much of what we should have learned over the last half-century, or more, simply went unlearned. While we have done quite well in learning what has been called elsewhere “the joint game,” Iraq demonstrates how far we still have to go in learning the “interagency game.” Why, with all the experience we have had with stability operations, are we unable, or unwilling, to simply designate one American official – civilian or military – where there is a large and ongoing military operation as being in charge of all U.S. Government activity? Specifically, during the CPA period, why was not Ambassador Bremer, or General Abizaid, or Lieutenant General Sanchez simply given the authority to conduct all U.S. Government activity in Iraq and then held accountable? Since the CPA went

out of business, why has neither General Casey nor the American ambassador been given that responsibility and the requisite authority? In the words of the King of Siam, "It is a puzzlement."

Finally, the case of CCAI in Colombia shows both how the American supporting effort can be enhanced by effective unity of command under the ambassador, and how an effective leader like President Uribe can take somebody else's good idea, make it his own, and create an effective national structure with unity of command to achieve unity of effort. What makes CCAI both unique and exciting is that it retains the principle of unity of command, while at the same time making certain that all the critical institutional stakeholders have voice and vote. Thus, CCAI is, perhaps, a model for the future organization of operational level interagency actions.

## **POSTSCRIPT – U.S. ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGES AT THE OPERATIONAL LEVEL**

Recently, the State Department has created an Office of Coordination for Reconstruction and Stability Operations, and the National Security Council, Policy Coordinating Committee (PCC) on Reconstruction and Stabilization (R&S) has developed an action plan for interagency management of reconstruction and stabilization operations.<sup>44</sup> Two of the three model organizations proposed in this action plan are relevant to the subject of this chapter. One is the planning cell called a Humanitarian Reconstruction and Stabilization Team (HRST) that will be deployed on request of the regional combatant commander to the combatant command to augment his Plans Division with civilian R&S planning capability. The other proposed

organization is an Advanced Civilian Team (ACT) for field management and coordination.

It is expected that multiple ACTs would deploy to various provinces or geographic sectors in a country. Under a combat scenario, the ACTs provide immediate civilian presence to work with military commanders, conduct assessments, engage local authorities, coordinate with international programs, initiate programs in the field, and prepare for longer-term civilian programs. Under a non-combat scenario, the ACTs provide similar functions, advising an Ambassador or Chief of Mission and supporting a headquarters ACT staff that augments Embassy operations and coordinates provincial level ACTs.<sup>45</sup>

Although these organizations are highly relevant to the success of stability operations—in much the same manner as the Briggs committees were in Malaya—they do not directly address the main point of this chapter: *unity of command*.

In the case of the HRST, unity of command is not an issue. It works for the combatant commander as an augmentation of his Plans Division. Neither is unity of command an issue with respect to the noncombat scenario ACT. It works for the Ambassador/Chief of Mission. Unity of command is an issue in the combat scenario ACT which *works with military commanders*. The issue is clearly, “Who is in charge?” If this is not spelled out, then the achievement of unity of effort at the operational level is likely to be less than optimal, as the case studies of this chapter have pointed out.

## ENDNOTES - CHAPTER 10

1. The opinions expressed here are those of the author and do not represent the views of CHDS, the National Defense University, the Department of Defense, or the U.S. Government.



2. The names keep changing. Current U.S. Army Doctrine calls them "stability operations," although there are some who want to add "reconstruction." For a tour of the name game, see John T. Fishel, "Little Wars, Small Wars, LIC, OOTW, The GAP, and Things That Go Bump in the Night," *Low Intensity Conflict & Law Enforcement*, Vol. 4, No. 3, Winter 1995, pp. 372-398.

3. What the military calls doctrine is a distillation of operational lessons, tactics, techniques, and procedures that are written into training manuals and provide the ways in which military operations are normally conducted. Doctrine provides the underlying concept of "train as you fight." Civilian organizations claim not to have doctrine but, in fact, have something equivalent. Today, the business term of art is "best practices."

4. C. E. Caldwell, *Small Wars Manual*, Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps, Washington, DC, 1940, republished 1987.

5. FM 100-20, *Low Intensity Conflict*, Headquarters, Department of the Army (HQDA), Washington, DC, 1981.

6. Air Force Pamphlet (AFP) 3-20, FM 100-20, *Low Intensity Conflict*, HQDAF, HQDA, Washington, DC, 1990.

7. FM 100-5, *Operations*, HQDA, Washington, DC, 1993.

8. Joint Pub 3.0, *Operations*, HQCJCS, Washington, DC, 2008.

9. *Small Wars and Insurgencies*, Vol. 3, No. 3, Winter 1992, Frank Cass, London, UK, pp. 272-310.

10. For those who do not understand the statistics: multiple R squared of 0.90 means that the outcome is explained (varies with) the seven dimensions 90 percent of the time; a p of < (less than) 0.001 means that this result could have happened by chance alone less than one time in 10,000.

11. Max G. Manwaring and Kimbra L. Fishel, "Lessons That Should Have Been Learned: Toward a Theory of Engagement for 'The Savage Wars of Peace'," in John T. Fishel, ed., *The Savage Wars of Peace: Toward a New Paradigm of Peace Operations*, Boulder,

CO: Westview Press, 1999, p. 205. The other key dimension was legitimacy.

12. See John T. Fishel, "War by Other Means," in Fishel, ed., *The Savage Wars of Peace*, pp. 6-8.

13. See Richard Duncan Downie, *Learning from Conflict: The U.S. Military in Vietnam, El Salvador, and the Drug War*, Westport, CT: Praeger, 1998.

14. Sam C. Sarkesian, *Unconventional Conflicts in a New Security Era: Lessons From Malaya and Vietnam*, Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, p. 71.

15. Donald Mackay, *The Malayan Emergency 1948-60: The Domino that Stood*, London, UK: Brassey's, 1997, p. 86.

16. *Ibid.*, p. 89.

17. *Ibid.*

18. John A. Nagl, *Counterinsurgency Lessons From Malaya and Vietnam: Learning to Eat Soup with a Knife*, Westport, CT: Praeger, 2001, p. 87.

19. *Ibid.*, p. 88.

20. *Ibid.*

21. *Ibid.*, p. 89.

22. Sarkesian, p. 159.

23. *Ibid.*

24. Nagl, p. 165.

25. Quoted in *Ibid.*, p. 166.

26. John D. Waghelstein, "Military-to-Military Contacts: Personal Observations—The El Salvador Case," *Low Intensity Conflict & Law Enforcement*, Vol. 10, No. 2, Summer 2001, pp. 1-45.

27. Waghelstein, pp. 29–30.

28. *Ibid.*, p. 20.

29. *Ibid.*, p. 22.

30. The author witnessed these coordination efforts first hand while assigned as the Executive Officer of the Combined ESAF Assessment Team during 1987 and 1988.

31. Personal communication from Ambassador Corr.

32. Waghelstein, p. 22.

33. Ronald Reagan, NSDD 221, *Narcotics and National Security*, April 8, 1986, p. 3.

34. George H. W. Bush, NSD 18, *International Counternarcotics Strategy*, August 21, 1989, p. 3.

35. James Jay Carafano, "A Better Way to Fight Terrorism," [www.foxnews.com/printer\\_friendly\\_story/0,3566,156732,00](http://www.foxnews.com/printer_friendly_story/0,3566,156732,00), May 18, 2005.

36. The analogy with Vietnam *only* applies to the issue of interagency coordination and the related principle of unity of effort. For a more complete discussion of my analysis of stability operations in Iraq, see Chapter 14 of John T. Fishel and Max G. Manwaring, *Uncomfortable Wars Revisited*, Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2005.

37. See Tommy Franks, *American Soldier*, New York: Regan Books, 2004, especially pp. 389, 419–425, 523–530.

38. Quoted by Walter Pincus in *Washington Post*, "Memo: U.S. Lacked Full Postwar Iraq Plan," June 12, 2005, pp. A1, A22.

39. Another problem of coordination in Iraq is between U.S. forces and nongovernmental agencies, especially contractors, and even more especially armed military support contractors. Coordination with entities of these kinds brings us into the

realm of what is coming to be called "Integrated Operations." See Richard D. Downie, "Defining Integrated Operations," *Joint Force Quarterly*, Third Quarter, 2005, pp. 10-14. On June 13, 2005, National Public Radio's Morning Edition did a story about the problems of coordination between the Marines and some armed contractors who the Marines detained after an apparent "blue on blue" firefight.

40. USSOUTHCOM briefing paper, "Colombian Coordination Center for Integrated Action," October 19, 2004.

41. *Ibid.*

42. *Ibid.*

43. Multiple iterations of Ambassador David Passage's lecture to the U.S. Army Command and General Staff Officer Course between 1992 and 1997.

44. PCC on Reconstruction & Stabilization, *Overview and Action Plan: Interagency Management of Reconstruction & Stabilization Operations: Models for Planning, Management & Deployment*, unclassified, no date. This postscript is drawn from the above document.

45. *Ibid.*, p. 3.



## **CHAPTER 11**

### **EDUCATING NATIONAL SECURITY LEADERS FOR WORKING IN THE INTERAGENCY PROCESS**

**Michael Welken**

**With Contributions from the  
Interagency Transformation and Education Analysis  
(ITEA) Staff  
of the National Defense University**

#### **Introduction.**

This chapter highlights the efforts underway to educate statesmen in interagency collaboration, planning, and integration. Interagency education should produce “strategic artisans” who have the intellectual breadth and competencies to perform in an increasingly post-Westphelian globe where domestic and international domains of policy are hardly distinguishable.

It is imperative that we quench the thirst for understanding how the many actors involved in national security deal with matters that cross functional and departmental boundaries. For example, within specific communities involved in intelligence and homeland security, “learning” professionals are attempting to integrate education and rotation opportunities for employees to create an intraagency “joint” culture. Similarly, as agencies once serving on the periphery of national security affairs move to the forefront, there is a larger impetus to educate others on their specific role in policy integration.

The concept of interagency education arose out of the compelling lessons learned in the activities America conducted abroad. Establishing a direction and structure for military operations other than war in the 1990s required understanding the capabilities that could not be left to ad hocery and trial and error. The evolution of Presidential Decision Directive-56 (PDD-56) on Complex Contingency Operations in 1997 during the Clinton administration (discussed later) as a vehicle to provide interagency integration resulted in the establishment of formal organizations to analyze how to bring together the elements of national power into a functional structure. To this day, the landmark legacy of PDD-56 continues to drive and define how interagency education is developed and delivered to audiences throughout the government.

It is apparent that interagency education does not reach enough people. The nature of the personnel policies and reward systems among the departments and agencies limits opportunities for education for civilian employees because most departments and agencies do not have an adequate training "float." The latter term refers to sufficient redundancy in personnel so as to have more people in place to allow a certain percentage to be in training or education programs, or in case the government needs to surge personnel in crisis situations. For example, for very good reasons the Department of Defense (DoD) had an 11 percent float, while the Department of State (DOS) in late 2007 had a negative 3 percent, and those diplomats available for professional development programs were focused on predeployment training, such as foreign language preparation. Gaps in interagency education contribute to disjointed planning in areas such as post-conflict stabilization and reconstruction, strategic

communications, and domestic preparedness. Among the many hurdles are the multiplicity of organizational cultures and subcultures, severe personnel and resource limitations and asymmetries, differential career benefits to individuals and agencies and departments, as well as diverse ways of planning and implementing.

Interagency education heightens awareness of the limited flexibility within government to adapt to the changing strategic landscape. The best, and most effective way, to build the capability to address emerging challenges is to create a government-wide education system that values career-long learning for employees. Better coordination across the interagency community may not happen immediately because of improved education; it will have to be a cumulative effort sustained over time, bearing fruit in the mid-term future.

### **Interagency Education.**

As the sun rises on the 21st century, the keys to national security will not necessarily be stored within the confines of the traditional guardians of the national interests: DoD, DOS, and the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). The terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 (9/11), the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan, the devastation of Hurricane Katrina, and a variety of commitments of lesser scale, were unscheduled wakeup calls about the need to adapt the way the government is organized to deal with the new threats. Additionally, new concerns continue to arise in the areas of pandemic influenza, environmental degradation, international organized crime, corruption, weak to failing states, and global economic health. None of these challenges can be addressed purely by



traditional diplomacy or military power. Statesmen must be prepared to seamlessly integrate a diversity of expertise, resources, and institutional cultures. The following pages highlight programs that have brought interagency partners into the classroom.

### **General and Topical Strategic Interagency Education.**

The six programs of interagency education are at the National War College (NWC) and Industrial College of the Armed Forces (ICAF), the School for National Security Executive Education (SNSEE), the Joint Forces Staff College (JFSC), the U.S. Army War College (USAWC), and the Interagency Education, Transformation & Analysis (ITEA) program. Over the last decade, the brick and mortar institutions at the top of DoD's Joint Professional Military Education (JPME) system have increasingly recruited students and faculty members from the greater interagency community outside of DoD to enrich the education of senior military and civilian leaders. This, in turn, has educated students in strategic planning and regional affairs, as well as foreign and defense policy. Students acquire a greater understanding of the uses of military power and the competencies of military officers, which will radiate among their departments and agencies. Students from beyond the military also convey the competencies, missions, cultures, and constraints of their home departments. Collectively, all students develop a valuable network of personal contacts from the interagency community. Even though the number of slots for non-DoD students at the NWC/ICAF/JFSC has increased over the years, the primary goal of these institutions is to educate senior military leaders. It will

never be their responsibility to carry the burden of educating all senior leaders.

In conjunction with the traditional JPME educational components at NDU, the ITEA and SNSEE programs offer flexible courses. The ITEA program, housed within the NDU's Institute for National Strategic Studies, offers an alternative to the traditional resident programs that are typical of a university structure. The ITEA program began in 1997 with a focus on promoting interagency education within the "Beltway" and for the Regional Combatant Commands (COCOMs), and later their Joint Interagency Coordination Groups (JIACGs). ITEA hosts educational programs for COCOMs and quarterly Interagency Coordination Symposia for the entire Washington community. These courses provide an overview of current initiatives involving coordination, highlight best practices, and bring together multiple departments and agencies so that participants can understand the capabilities and cultures of government components. ITEA provides courses that are free of charge, but is only able to offer courses on a quarterly basis with limited capacity. Finally, ITEA has developed distance learning curriculum through DoD's Joint Knowledge Development and Distribution Capability and continues to build curriculum that can be delivered electronically to students.

SNSEE, also housed at NDU, offers graduate-level courses. Its corps of adjunct faculty and guest speakers allow students to delve deeply into national security. SNSEE offers courses during the evenings and weekends, which is attractive to busy professionals. SNSEE operates in a manner similar to a traditional graduate school where tuition is paid on a per course basis. In addition to providing counterterrorism

education, SNSEE is developing concentrations for the Master's program that focus on areas such as conflict management (security, stabilization, transition, and reconstruction operations) and domestic preparedness. The success of both programs shows that education for the interagency community demands flexibility in curriculum design and delivery.

Since 2005, the USAWC has developed the most robust education program. Called the National Security Policy Program (NSPP) and underwritten by the U.S. Army's Training and Doctrine Command, the venture reaches a select set of 15 students who are primed for future interagency work. Taught over two semesters, the NSPP curriculum requires courses in policymaking and implementation, national security public policy, and regional studies. Additionally NSPP offers elective coursework ranging from the military and the media, to Congress and the military, civil-military relations, national level intelligence, and crisis action planning. A central feature of the program is a 2-week internship in the Washington policy-strategy community, as well as extensive consultations with the DOS, the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the Joint Staff, the National Security Council staff, the Intelligence Community (IC), and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). The program also seeks to assist graduates find onward assignments in appropriate interagency jobs.

Other opportunities exist. However, outside of those educational components at NDU and the JPME system, even less capacity exists within the U.S. Government regarding general strategic and integrative education for civilian employees. That said, over the last few years more and more individual topical courses catering to an interagency audience have sprung up throughout government on an ad-hoc

and demand-driven basis. A few examples include the courses offered at the National Intelligence University (formerly the Sherman Kent School) on topics relating to intelligence analysis, proliferation, and regional concerns. Courses on economic development, stabilization and reconstruction, rule of law, and peace operations are offered through the Center for Technology and National Security Policy (CTNSP) at NDU, the United States Institute of Peace (USIP), the DOS Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization, the Peacekeeping and Stability Operations Institute (PKSOI) at the USAWC, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), and the Department of Energy (DOE). Other opportunities come from the Office of Personnel Management's Federal Executive Institute, as well at the DOS Foreign Service Institute, on a wide range of topics.

### **Intra-agency Education.**

After the Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986 was passed, DoD underwent (and is still undergoing) radical changes to improve the operational coordination between and among the four services. The concept of "jointness" was advanced by creating an educational system and military personnel system that tied joint education to career promotion. Because of these factors, as well as the commitment to professional officer education and training within the U.S. military, DoD has been able to develop and increase educational offerings. The result of this improved intraagency coordination has been greater operational effectiveness and a more common military culture.

Other agencies are undergoing similar transformations. Most notable are the intelligence community, now headed by the Office of the Director of National Intelligence (created in 2006), and the DHS (2002). Both examples show how, in an effort to build greater synergy among components, education promotes collaboration. Efforts at improved coordination through interagency education begin with improvements in individual agencies and departments (or the intraagency communities). Cadres of professionals in the intelligence and homeland security communities are able to speak more effectively to concerns of an entire component of national security instead of a single office. Intraagency education remains in its infancy, but the discussion of intraagency education is reminiscent of initial discussions for creating jointness within the military in the 1980s and 1990s.

Throughout the intelligence community (IC), there are initiatives to streamline education for entry-level staff as well as increase the opportunities for staff in both the analytical and operational directorates. Additionally, with the formation of the National Intelligence University, intelligence professionals are able to gain a much better understanding of how the IC operates as a whole. Education is a tool to break down the cultural barriers between intelligence specialties and organizations by encouraging entry and mid-level professionals to interact more frequently than ever before. In this case, education is supplemented with rotational assignments, which vary from the physical location of individuals in another component to temporary assignments on issue-based working groups with individuals from the IC. The results of this change mean that in the future an analyst in an

interagency setting will be able to represent more adequately the views of an entire community. This is a dramatic improvement from the way the IC operated in the late 1990s.

DHS has taken a different approach to intraagency education. Since DHS components represent a great span of individual functional responsibilities, its approach to intraagency education involves much more than centralizing education and providing rotations. DHS educational requirements include equities that fall far outside the federal government: state and local governments as well as the private sector. To accomplish these challenging tasks, DHS has appointed a Chief Learning Officer and has begun developing a professional education that may result in a Homeland Security University system. The goal is a DHS organizational culture that is able to stretch across the entire Department by creating a professional cadre which understands the component parts of DHS and how their labors can develop and execute strategic plans. Alternative to this, DHS has also worked to build a Homeland Security and Defense Education Consortium ([www.hsdec.org](http://www.hsdec.org)) where employees can attend courses in the private sector or with state and local partners on topics of mutual interest. This effort will ultimately create small cadres of professionals who are familiar with the component capabilities that can be brought to bear on certain needs. The DHS educational mission brings together individuals at the top of the organization to focus on departmental strategic issues as well as professionals in specific functional areas to improve coordination with players who are not in the federal government.

These examples build on the common theme that education improves the ability of an organization to

work collaboratively with other entities. The IC and DHS have some advantages over education writ large across the entire government. Since the CIA University (Sherman Kent School) had already been operating for years and had an education mission, it was easier for the IC to expand capabilities. DHS, as a new player in national security, can bring education to the table under the mandate of building up organizational capacity. Other departments are involved in national security (Department of Health and Human Services, Department of Treasury, Department of Agriculture, DOE, to name a few) but have even fewer resources. In-house learning opportunities, such as the Treasury Executive Institute, are increasing, but such programs face organizational culture, mandate and resource constraints.

### **Evolution of Interagency Education.**

Understanding the evolution of interagency education is essential in determining how to educate the strategic leaders of tomorrow. It is not a new phenomenon. Since the institution of Professional Military Education (PME), select DOS employees and others from the Federal Government interagency community have attended the NWC, the ICAF, and the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and Air War Colleges. The formalization of interagency education, though, did not occur until 1997 with the signing of PDD-56, the document that sanctified planning for managing complex contingency operations. During the initial days of the George W. Bush administration in 2001 following the signing of National Security Presidential Directive 1 (NSPD-1), the structure of coordination and responsibilities in the field of interagency collaboration

were to be formalized in a subsequent “process based” National Security Presidential Directive (NSPD). Regrettably, this never occurred, in part because of institutional infighting. The proposed NSPD, informally referred to as NSPD-XX, was never completed.

In the mid-1990s, experts in at the War Gaming and Simulation Center (now the National Strategic Gaming Center) of NDU, the Senior Seminar Division (now the Senior Policy Seminars Division) of the DOS, and the Foreign Service Institute undertook the development of strategic exercises to map out how the United States fit into the new international security paradigm. Findings from these exercises showed significant gaps in how the DOS and DoD interacted. Specifically, stovepipes had developed that did not allow for communication, let alone collaboration. With complex situations in the real world at the same time (Bangladesh, Somalia, Haiti, Bosnia), the exercise results reaffirmed the many challenges developing over the new strategic landscape. From the perspectives of DoD and the DOS, top-level direction in the area of coordination was required to address the emerging security challenges. PDD-56 intended to bring some clarity to the task of coordination, with one component being interagency education.

During this same period, globalization pushed both the private sector and departments and agencies that traditionally did not operate overseas into more active roles. Additionally, the concept of national security began to evolve away from the traditional military and diplomatic instruments of national power. For example, during this period, agencies such as the Department of Health and Human Services, the Department of Justice (primarily the Federal Bureau of Investigation), the Department of Commerce (beyond the Foreign



Commercial Service), and the Department of Treasury began developing outward-looking and international strategic plans to support evolving national security strategies. Congress funded new initiatives because of the growing need for the application of resources in areas beyond the traditional military and diplomatic spheres. Globalization affected two factors relating to coordination: (1) more agencies were becoming involved in the business of national security, and (2) traditional departments (primarily DoD) began to adapt to the environment by balancing the kinetic warfighting model with soft power.

The landscape shifted in both size and scope as more players attempted to navigate the waters of national security. This created overlapping missions among organizations. Yet there was no governing strategy document which required coordination beyond the National Security Council system. Throughout the 1990s, departments and offices working on national security grew without matching growth in governance structures to facilitate coordination and cooperation. As the decade drew to a close and budgets began to decrease, territorialism between and among the policy communities began to rise. The issue of organizational sovereignty became much more apparent in the national security community as departments and agencies were placed in positions to purposefully avoid coordination in order to preserve their autonomy.

The problems of the 1990s in the area of coordination were painfully realized in the beginning of the 21st century with the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 (9/11), the challenges of stabilization and reconstruction of Iraq, and the inadequate and far from seamless response to Hurricane Katrina. With the creation of DHS and the organization of the IC under

the Director of National Intelligence, structural progress has alleviated some of the coordination challenges. However, transnational issues led departments that traditionally looked at international security to delve into domestic security. Today the borders between the two have blurred and the definition of “national security” encompasses both domestic and international concerns. The two most prominent examples of this new reality are the establishment of U.S. NORTHCOM by DoD and the matter of domestic surveillance by the IC. These new directions for traditional national security organizations added another layer to the challenge of coordination. Budgets for offices working on national security increased, not simply because of globalization, but because of demand for improved responses to the challenges. Despite the impetus for increasing response capabilities, little guidance has been delivered from the topmost level of government regarding coordination, creating more need for clarification in classroom instruction.

### **Interagency Education for Integration and Coordination.**

The transformation of the strategic landscape included an awareness of a need for change within the academic community. Coincidentally, the concept of interagency education began not because of a lack of understanding in the interagency community, but through the work of a few individuals who saw the link between education and coordination. Interagency education has been transformed into a popular strategy to break down stovepipes in government. Today, the interagency education community faces its own challenge in coordinating course offerings, while

defining topics, learning areas, objectives, standards, and audiences.

Interagency education developed largely out of the recognition that there was a less than complete understanding of the multiple and often complex roles, missions, and functions of departments and agencies. For example, with the emergence of new threats and conflicts in the 1990s, DoD realized that military personnel were consistently required to work with other government departments. When Pentagon leaders asked other agencies to provide them with “strategic planning guidance” or an “OPLAN,” many in the military community could not understand that civilian departments and agencies do not develop plans in the same fashion as the planning shops in the Joint Staff, commands, or services. Thus, the purpose of interagency education from the innocent military point of view was (1) to allow the military to understand why members of “the interagency” (or “interagencies” – note that interagency is not a noun) operate the way they do, and (2) to educate “the interagencies” (again, in as much as it is not an entity, pluralizing the term only magnifies the opportunity for misunderstanding and confusion) on how to plan.

With the changing landscape, multiple Pentagon meetings focused on such topics as how to “spin the interagency up” on national security, and a few select individuals were tasked to find counterparts to Pentagon officials, such as the Deputy Director of Strategic Plans in the Strategic Planning Division of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Few could come to terms with the fact that the interagency community outside of DoD was stretched thin, and many times there existed no direct counterparts. Interagency education took root from awareness of the profound misunderstandings and ignorance about how the government functions.

During this time, senior officials in DoD and the DOS saw the effect of the lack of coordination on the implementation of national security strategy. Since DoD possessed a strong history in education for national security and maintained its JPME system, small, yet significant transformations began to occur. At the same time, officials in the DOS began to recognize the need to develop its Foreign Service Officers (FSOs) and complement the training received at the Department's Foreign Service Institute (FSI) with integrative education. The decision to address it led to a dramatic increase in the number of students outside of the military who attended the NWC, the ICAF, and other senior service schools in the JPME system. "Dramatic" in this context does not presuppose "adequate" for the expanding needs of the government; rather a sustained student population from DOS was ensured, and DoD assured that sufficient quotas were reserved for students from outside the military ranks.

Additionally, this period saw the birth and growth of programs such as the U.S. Army's Peacekeeping Institute (now the Peacekeeping and Stability Operations Institute or PKSOI) to look at coordination in post-conflict reconstruction and stabilization operations. The ITEA program at NDU, in a complementary initiative, began to promote a general understanding of the players and processes involved in interagency complex operations. As these programs were promoting interagency collaboration, 9/11 proved that communication, cooperation, coordination, and collaboration within the U.S. Government were more important than ever.

The education community began to evaluate the need to address interagency coordination in its programs. The second problem resulting from the

absence of the authority from NSPD-XX was that there was no national level document for organizations to draw from in creating standard curriculum and no top-level support for budgetary authority. The majority of interagency education mechanisms that were developed came from DoD, and because of this, the curriculum, student ratio, and program focus had to demonstrate a direct benefit to JPME and military operations. For instance, the ITEA program at NDU was the primary point of contact for providing education to the newly formed JIACGs, even though a larger ITEA focus was to provide generalist education to not only those working and serving at a COCOM, but also those civilians of the federal executive branch agencies who must work with interagency colleagues. In addition, the SNSEE program at NDU was originally touted as a program to provide functional interagency education on counterterrorism. SNSEE faculty and program managers maintained that counterterrorism education also required students to understand the functions, and missions of government departments.

Lacking the budgets to sustain the daunting task of educating, those who viewed this lack of coordination as a continual problem (NDU-ITEA, USAEC, USIP, and others) began to build a support network. Additionally, academic institutions, think tanks, and the business community joined in (George Mason University and the Institute for Defense Analysis). These informal networks of coinciding interests began analyzing the demand for interagency education and the type of curriculum that would be needed.

Without NSPD-XX, agencies did not have the top-level support or funding to develop independent education programs. When the strategic landscape shifted and the education capability did not, DoD was

the only department with an established curriculum. The ensuing problem was that those institutions which offered interagency education remained under the DoD umbrella and had a mission of primarily supporting the development of Joint Qualified Officers (JQOs). The matter of governance over the content and process becomes essential because the educational delivery mechanism must be viewed as an honest broker among various players. This is a continual challenge that developed directly from the lack of NSPD-XX and other top-level guidance.

In short, there emerged a great motivation to revolutionize the way in which government was to operate. The transformation of operating principles also required a transformation in how individuals are to be educated throughout government. Without the top-level guidance in how the interagency community was to coordinate and operate, the educational systems for promoting such learning remained tied to the interests of parent organizations. On one hand, the capacity for delivering interagency education to audiences increased tremendously over a short period, but on the other, no interagency education program had the resource and policy backing to offer a standardized curriculum to a large audience. Note that the USAWC program reaches 15 people each year, and that if one was to total the educational output of all programs noted, vast deficiencies in the number of individuals educated persist.

### **Continuing Gaps.**

Educating national security leaders in how the interagency functions was a goal of many programs that began operating in the late 1990s. Despite this,

answering the questions that surrounded the term “the interagency” remained much more difficult than anyone anticipated. Without specific and significant budgetary authority and guidance from Congress or the President, standardizing interagency curricular guidelines and course offerings remained impossible. Programs expanded on the basis of what funding could be gathered in departmental and office budgets, creating a fragmented effort. Despite possessing the mission of improving coordination, these programs often found it difficult, if not impossible, to coordinate their own educational offerings.

### **Disjointed Educational Offerings.**

Everyone in the field of interagency education had properly begun to identify the needs regarding the coordination of strategic plans to address complex operations. One only had to look a few years earlier to the lessons learned from Hurricane Mitch, Somalia, Haiti, and Bosnia—as well as the terrorist attacks in the 1990s—to realize that a major failing of plans was the inability to adequately understand the capabilities of other U.S. Government institutions and to close the seams between them. The lifeblood of interagency education programs were topical issues, for instance, examining peacekeeping specifically and other issues of interagency concern. The widening gap between educational programs did not allow for curriculum standardization and created ad hoc solutions.

One new initiative was promoted by NWC and ICAF. NWC and ICAF have been touted as the pinnacle of strategic education within the government, and their approach was to recruit more students from the interagency community, as well as create faculty

chairs for previously unrepresented populations of the interagency. Additionally, the hiring process began to bring in faculty members with new ideas, whose research and scholarly interests examined relevant emerging concepts. NWC and ICAF brought in new students. But the mission of NDU and other JPME institutions was not to be a hub for education; it was to educate warriors for strategic military leadership. NWC and ICAF succeeded in their mission to provide greater interagency exposure to their students.

Educational programs also began to bring professionals together to learn how to resolve specific problems. Many of these programs were tasked to examine a single subject, such as terrorism, and brought in students with diverse interagency experience. The best example of this is SNSEE. Its student population includes representation from various departments and agencies as well as considerable international participation, but even though the curriculum has widened, education focused on counterterrorism. During class discussions, students speak often of their office's capabilities to respond in the area of counterterrorism, but these discussions do not meet the level of interagency education that is required. The primary mission of SNSEE and other organizations like it is to provide education on topics relating to national security, not to increase the understanding of individual departmental capabilities to coordinate, conduct and carry out plans, and operate in a complex environment in concert with other agencies.

Generalist education in interagency affairs emerged around the same time. The ITEA program originally took off as an educational initiative for JIACGs. The curriculum offerings of ITEA attempted to orient participants to the different organizational structures,



cultures, and planning mechanisms of interagency community members. This program has since expanded to offer educational programs to the broader Washington community. Though valuable, the ITEA curriculum on the many segments of the government has been hampered by small staff, a relatively modest budget, and dependence on outside speakers. As such, ITEA has been unable to address the eager needs of the interagency community. Nevertheless, ITEA continues to serve as a hub for those in the business of interagency education, providing a forum to share information on upcoming courses. The ITEA staff conducts outreach to keep up-to-date on the current status of policy affecting interagency collaboration. This unfortunately is not enough to address the need, demand, or requirement for strategic-level interagency education.

More and more players are entering interagency education. Even though these programs are adding to the substance of education available for government civilians, little work has been done in cross-analyzing what competencies are built through these courses, and how the courses build on each other to produce an educated individual who is able to manage a wide array of challenges in the new strategic landscape.

### **Lacking Incentives.**

One of the most important gaps in interagency education is the authority and budget to allow departments and agencies to send their personnel to courses. In addition, no department or agency is specifically tasked with providing education as part of its primary mission, which means that as the budgetary process goes forward, learning—both education and training—is the first section of a budget to be cut. This

also means that the likelihood of a department offering stand-alone education is low. The lack of authority cannot be easily addressed.

With the exception of those in military uniform and a limited number of Foreign Service Officers, there is little education available to general civilians throughout the government. One of the roots of this problem comes in the philosophy and regulations of hiring procedures, whereby an individual who is hired for any given position is expected to already possess the education, experience, and background for the job. Professional development in positions supposedly comes through time-in-grade, on-the-job training, and the completion of limited training. Because of this, often education that betters the individual and the organization only takes place through either employees personally pursuing courses in the evenings and weekends or through back-office begging and brokering. Even at the close of a beneficial educational engagement, personnel do not reap rewards within their personnel systems; their careers can at some times even be hurt by "time away." There are limited mechanisms in the government personnel system to keep track of education (outside of degrees) or to translate education into incentives. Individual development plans are rarely used or implemented in a consistent or robust fashion. In many cases, personnel can only seek out new opportunities through a new position with a higher grade. Education can also be detrimental to a career, with managers believing that time away from the office is harmful to the organization. Thus, employees who obtain education during office hours are not rewarded.

From the organizational perspective, the budget line item for employee education either does not exist or is at a miniscule level. Also, with many agencies

operating with uncertain budget futures and a finite team of employees, any loss of one employee to even a 3-day course means that someone's job is not getting accomplished for 3 days. With hardly any "training float" for education in civilian agencies, there is no guarantee that representatives from departments and agencies will even be able to attend courses that are developed and offered—no matter how beneficial a particular course would be to the department, the government, and the individual. Even when offices are able to allow personnel to attend a course, there is no direct link that shows employers what is being brought back to the office. Education is currently not cumulative or standardized for building new recognized skills and aptitudes, which means that the direct benefit of allowing employees to attend courses is limited severely.

The question of authority is not one that can be answered by anyone other than those serving within the highest echelons of power. Transforming departmental missions to include education, building meaning in education, and creating a float of personnel to attend to their educational development will require legislation, some of it on par with the National Security Act of 1947 or the Goldwater-Nichols Defense Reorganization Act of 1986.

### **The Way Forward.**

At this point, the U.S. Government lacks authority and budget priority for promoting interagency education. Despite these limitations, one only has to look at the issues on the strategic horizon to know that integration and collaboration will be essential in maintaining the national security of the United States.

The mission of improving coordination through education is being accepted throughout government.

The perennial conundrum is the creation of education that (1) means something to employees in terms of career growth, (2) contributes to the departmental and agency mission, and (3) coincides with broad budget and personnel limitations throughout the government. These limitations, however vexing, provide great insight into what the future of interagency education could look like. One idea, requiring presidential and/or congressional support, is building a university system focused on education. Another more likely scenario is bringing together educational instruments throughout the government into a national security educational consortium.

### **National Security University.**

The concept of a National Security University (NSU), where a singular brick and mortar institution would educate mid- and senior-level government personnel on topics relating to the new strategic landscape, is not a new one. This idea has been put forth in loose terms in research projects ranging from the “Beyond Goldwater-Nichols Project” (of the Center for Strategic and International Studies), to more formal government reports examining lessons learned in Hurricane Katrina and Iraq. In addition, the NSU concept appeared in DoD’s 2006 *Quadrennial Defense Review* and the subsequent implementation roadmap on Building Partnership Capacity.

In its initial framing, the NSU centered on transforming NDU and increasing its capacity to educate personnel in the interagency community outside of the military. Multiple levels of working groups were formed

from NDU, other DoD components, and the broader interagency community to discuss the development of an NSU concept that would not interfere with the successes of JPME, while being accessible to a greater number of people through short courses and distance learning. Throughout the conversations, the largest stumbling blocks remained (1) governance, (2) the lack of a personnel float in civilian agencies, (3) the absence of agreement on competencies and learning objectives (or even a mechanism to reach such agreement), and (4) the uncertain contribution of a completed course to advancing a person's career.

Lamentably, these hurdles were insurmountable, lacking presidential or congressional support. In addition, since the initiative was fueled by a DoD planning document, garnering the support of the interagency community remained problematic. The small cadre of contributors was unable to address the larger challenges of coordination that remained ingrained in the interagency process that was built to address the landscape of a bipolar Cold War world. This said, the working groups were able to identify (1) national competencies required for strategic leaders in the 21st century, (2) further issues regarding personnel, and (3) opportunities regarding the educational offerings already existing throughout government.

In these discussions, competencies and curriculum were discussed and generally agreed upon to include the development of leaders who are (1) "managers of change," adaptive to uncertainty and strategic change; (2) culturally aware, understanding the operations and capabilities of other players in the strategic arena; (3) technologically astute, understanding the national capabilities relating to information systems and enabling systems such as budgeting, contracting,

and legal authorities; (4) operationally skilled, able to form and execute interagency plans; and, (5) creative thinkers, able to build effective lessons learned and approach strategy development with long-term vision.

### **National Security Education Consortium.**

Another idea that entered the discussion is the National Security Education Consortium (NSEC). This proposal is a continuation towards the goal of the original NSU concept, but eliminates many of the impediments associated with developing a new “brick and mortar” institution. Challenges persist and ultimately the NSEC idea may be replaced with alternatives, but in mid-2007, the consortium concept remained the best solution to the demand for interagency education.

On its face, the NSEC concept would allow for greater accessibility to education for personnel throughout the government. Initially the consortium intends to focus on bringing together the educational communities at NDU, the Foreign Service Institute, National Intelligence University, and the current educational component being developed at DHS. Instead of centralizing education through one university, courses will likely remain decentralized, allowing the experts who already teach topical and functional courses at each of the institutions to continue doing so. In addition, NDU intends to start with a pilot certificate program in academic year 2007-08, to combine and add to existing programs to create an opportunity to educate a wide array of students without disturbing the JPME successes modeled at NWC, ICAF, and JFSC.

In creating the NSEC, questions persist regarding its value to participants and management. Working

from another concept that was introduced in the 2006 *Quadrennial Defense Review*, participants who meet the core and specialty course requirements of the consortium would receive a special designation (national security officer/specialist). In the short term, this title is unlikely to create major professional incentives, but in the long term, the hope is that departments and agencies will create the requirement for applicants to possess the designation to have at least a hiring and promotion preference over those who do not. Conceptually, "national security officers/specialists" would be individuals who could effectively develop, execute, and evaluate interagency plans and serve as interagency agents within their departments and agencies.

Management of the courses and personnel involved in such a program remains integral to its success. Obviously some courses that exist throughout the consortium's components do not fill the competencies required by a national security officer. Management of education must meet multiple requirements to be effective: (1) determining how to "grandfather" current government personnel who possess the competencies that could automatically deem them to be national security officers, (2) determining standards for courses throughout the consortium to be considered for credit, (3) analyzing curriculum gaps in the system and making recommendations for courses to address them, (4) managing the status of students regarding their personnel records, (5) negotiating the transfer of funds between agencies for students to take courses at the different institutions, and, (6) continuing to build relationships outside of the existing consortium in hopes of broadening the participation of contributing institutions in the future. This will not be easy,

but success in creating a meaningful interagency educational program will only come through effective and centralized management.

Within the world of DoD, the NSEC concept may include the creation of a "College for National Security Studies" (CNSS) to be housed at NDU. Being the newest partner in an eventual consortium, CNSS would most likely be the location where the majority of the core courses are offered under a nontraditional (nonresident and short courses) Master's of National Security. In addition, CNSS could also serve in a development capacity for short courses and symposia offered through the NSEC curriculum. The hope is that CNSS would educate the majority of nonmilitary interagency students, and the creation of CNSS would have little effect on Joint Professional Military Education.

The NSEC concept leverages existing educational capacity throughout the national security community, yet allows institutions to remain focused on their primary mission of educating individuals within a certain community (i.e., FSO education at the Foreign Service Institute). In addition, the NSEC hopes to leverage the curriculum development and course experimentation resources at NDU, instead of starting the process from scratch. Problems regarding personnel floats cannot be addressed in this system save for course offerings that could be managed on a part-time, multiyear basis. Another determination that has to be made is the top-level leadership for NSEC, with ideas being discussed ranging from a board of directors, composed of the leaders of educational institutions in the consortium, to a subpolicy coordination committee for education in the NSC structure, to an appointed chancellor to be confirmed by Congress and reporting



to a Board of Visitors. These challenges will persist, but with little cost to the government, the NSEC could begin test courses within the next few years.

## **Conclusion.**

Some claim that the interagency process is broken, but many more state emphatically that the process for interagency collaboration never truly existed. In the NSC system, top level officials in the interagency community are able to eliminate conflicts over large-scale problems at the macro level, but when managing day-to-day operations in a crisis environment or on issues that never reach the NSC agenda, leaders rely on their personal contacts for immediate coordination. Managing national security cannot be left to personality and connections alone. Absent a formalized process for collaboration between departments and agencies, interagency education serves as a tool to build greater understanding and outreach for those who manage mandates that cross agencies.

Two ideas emerging, an NSU and NSEC, effectively begin to address the problem that persists throughout government. The largest challenge of the 21st century will not be terrorism or natural disasters; it will be creative management of national security capabilities housed within departments and agencies to respond to crises effectively and collaboratively.

Serious progress may be at hand. In May 2007, President George W. Bush signed an executive order establishing the program for "National Security Professional Development." This remarkable achievement bore fruit 2 months later in the form of a "National Strategy for the Development of National Security Professionals." The document states:

This Strategy initiates a formal national effort to attain a robust and integrated national security development program through access to education, training, and professional opportunities that enhance national security professionals' mission-related knowledge, skills, abilities, and experience. The successful performance of missions within each phase or function of defense, prevention, protection, response, and recovery—both military and civilian—are inextricably linked, and depends upon heightened collaboration and a mutual understanding of authorities, mission requirements, capabilities, and operations across the Federal Government.<sup>1</sup>

Let us hope that these excellent sentiments mobilize action to allow all departments and agencies to better leverage their greatest assets: people.

## **ENDNOTES - CHAPTER 11**

1. "National Strategy for the Development of National Security Professionals," Washington, DC: July 2007. See also Executive Order 13434, "National Security Professional Development," dated May 17, 2007, *Federal Register*, Vol. 72, No. 98, published May 22, 2007.



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## APPENDIX

### GLOSSARY OF SELECTED ACRONYMS

AID (or USAID)	U.S. Agency for International Development
APHS/CT	Assistant to the President for Homeland Security and Counterterrorism
APNSA (or NSA)	Assistant to the President/National Security Advisor
ARB	Accountability Review Board
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
COCOM	Regional Combatant Commander
DAP	Deputy Assistant to the President
DC	Deputies Committee
DCI (or DCIA)	Director of Central Intelligence
DHS	Department of Homeland Security
DIA	Defense Intelligence Agency
DNI	Director of National Intelligence
DNSA	Deputy National Security Advisor
DRI	Diplomatic Readiness Initiative
FSO	Foreign Service Officer
HSC	Homeland Security Council
HSPD	Homeland Security Policy Directive
IMET	International Military Education and Training Program
IWG	Interagency Working Group
JIACG	Joint Interagency Coordination Group
JIATF	Joint Interagency Coordination Task Force
NCTC	National Counterterrorism Center
NEC	National Economic Council

NGO	Nongovernmental Organization
NIC	National Intelligence Council
NIE	National Intelligence Estimate
NIP	National Intelligence Program
NME	National Military Establishment
NSA	National Security Act or National Security Advisor (or Assistant to the President/National Security Advisor (AP/NSA)
NSC	National Security Council
NSD	National Security Directive
NSDD	National Security Decision Directive
NSPD	National Security Presidential Directive
NSRB	National Security Resources Board
NSS	National Security Strategy
ODNI	Office of the Director of National Intelligence
OSCE	Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe
PC	Principals Committee
PCC	Policy Coordinating Committee
PDD	Presidential Decision Directive
PM	State Department Bureau of Political-Military Affairs
POLAD	Political Advisor to Military Commands
PRG	Policy Review Group
QDR	Quadrennial Defense Review
RSO	Reconstruction and Stabilization Operations
SAP	Special Assistant to the President
S/CRS	State Department Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization

SVTS	Secure Video Teleconferencing
SWNCC	State-War-Navy Coordinating Committee
USAID (or AID)	U.S. Agency for International Development
USIA	U.S. Information Agency
USMILGP	U.S. Military Group